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# THE HEATHEN HEART

## OR: THE GOSPEL AMONG THE CHINESE OF FORMOSA:

CAMPBELL N. MOODY

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CHINESE CHRISTIAN WOMEN.

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# THE
# HEATHEN HEART

## AN ACCOUNT OF THE RECEPTION OF THE GOSPEL AMONG THE CHINESE OF FORMOSA

BY

CAMPBELL N. MOODY, M.A.

MISSIONARY IN FORMOSA

Edinburgh and London

OLIPHANT, ANDERSON & FERRIER

1907

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# PREFACE

THOSE who have listened to the class lectures of Principal Lindsay, of Glasgow, will understand how much this little book owes to him. Some readers will prefer the brief account of Heathen conduct and popular religion, and some may turn at once to the stories and sketches of Chinese converts: but for me the chief thing is the light that Early Church History and Modern Missions throw on one another; and, of course, the central chapter is the fourth, "Christ Crossing the Threshold of the Heathen Heart." The chapters going before lead up to that; the two chapters on "Some Chinese Christians" illustrate it; those following arise from it, and from one another. The first and last chapters are less strictly relevant to the main subject, but they could not well be omitted.



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The matter of these chapters has been often thought over, and sometimes discussed, during the last twelve years. Most of the views expressed were partly formed during the first years of my residence abroad: further experience has developed and sometimes corrected, but usually confirmed, the opinions then adopted. I have often consulted my well-loved medical colleague, Dr David Landsborough, and I may venture to claim his agreement in almost every statement of importance.

It is difficult to free the mind from all prejudice. I have tried to be fair, and have not spoken hastily on any subject.

This book treats of Chinese in Formosa; it would have been rash to make general assertions about the Chinese people. But I have reason to believe that much of what has been said applies to Southern China and even to China at large.

That empire has hitherto been almost un-

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touched by Western thought or Christian civilization, so that the missionary works on virgin soil, just as he did long ago in the early Roman Empire. In the case of India and Japan it is somewhat different. They have been so much in contact with the Christian West that in them the great experiment of the first centuries cannot, perhaps, be repeated under precisely the same conditions. At least I have been unable to reach the positive conclusion that among simple Japanese Christians a missionary would be reminded, as among the Chinese he certainly is reminded, of the early days of Christianity. I have had little opportunity of inquiring about Indian converts.

I have to thank my friend, the Rev. W. M. Clow, B.D., for many serviceable suggestions and wise corrections.

I am deeply indebted to the Rev. W. Findlay, D.D., of Larkhall, for sparing time to read over the proofs, and in this matter I

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have to acknowledge the help of my brother Robert also.

The Rev. W. Dale has kindly supplied me with several photographs for the illustrations. The originals were taken by the Rev. Thomas Barclay, Mrs Barclay, the Rev. Hope Moncrieff, and one or two other friends.

CAMPBELL N. MOODY.

Bothwell, *September* 1907.

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# CONTENTS


## CHAPTER I

PAGE

FORMOSA UNDER THE RULE OF JAPAN . . 15

## CHAPTER II

THE CHARACTER AND CONDUCT OF A HEATHEN PEOPLE . . . . . 56

## CHAPTER III

THE RELIGION OF A HEATHEN PEOPLE . 95

## CHAPTER IV

CHRIST CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF THE HEATHEN HEART . . . . 115

## CHAPTER V

SOME CHINESE CHRISTIANS: THE STORY OF BROWN-HORSE WOOD . . . 148

## CHAPTER VI

SOME CHINESE CHRISTIANS (*Continued*) . . 177




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## CHAPTER VII

PAGE
THE DIFFICULTIES OF MISSIONARY LIFE . 204

## CHAPTER VIII

WHY MISSIONARIES ARE UNINTERESTING . 224

## CHAPTER IX

THE SCARCITY OF MISSIONARY WORKERS . 234

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# ILLUSTRATIONS


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Chinese Christian Women . | | *Frontispiece* |
| | | FACING PAGE |
| 2. Harrowing the Flooded Field . | } | 26 |
| 3. Planting Rice . . . . | } | |
| 4. Method of Landing in South Formosa . | | 32 |
| 5. A Country Church . . . | } | 115 |
| 6. A Town Church . . . | } | |
| 7. At the Ordination of Rev. Brown-Horse Wood . . . . . | | 158 |
| 8. Ministers and Elders . . . | | 183 |
| 9. Aboriginal Christians . . . | } | 216 |
| 10. Raw Chinese Converts . . . | } | |
| 11. Mountain Savages . . . | | 234 |


There are more savages in Formosa than there are in all the New Hebrides Islands, but not a single missionary is working among them.



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# CHAPTER I

## FORMOSA UNDER THE RULE OF JAPAN

### (A PRELIMINARY CHAPTER)

DESCRIPTIONS of Formosa may be found elsewhere, and a very short account is quite enough for our present aim. The island, which is reckoned 264 miles long and 80 miles broad at the broadest, lies partly north and partly south of the Tropic of Cancer, and for six or seven months the climate is similar to that of Singapore, while the remaining portion of the year is somewhat cooler. February, the coldest month, has a mean temperature equal to that of July in Scotland. Formosa is part of the chain of islands that girds the east coast of Asia, forming a link between Japan and the Philippine Islands; and it emphasizes its connection with Japan by the frequent earthquakes with which it is disturbed. Thus Japan has now possession



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of what may be accounted hers from of old by geological right. But Formosa's nearest neighbour is South China; Hong-Kong is not far off; and one night's voyage from Amoy brings the traveller to the island's western shores.

The earliest known population seems to have come chiefly, if not wholly, from the South Seas; and it is well known that the speech of some, at least, of the tribes is akin to the Malay language such as is spoken in islands of the South and in Singapore.[1]

It is very easy to understand how the persistent south winds of the summer season may have carried the savage fishermen to one island after another until in course of time they settled in the Philippines, and thence were driven once more to Formosa and even to Japan.

In 1624 the Dutch settled on the coast-lands, and continued to trade and govern and

[1] But, according to Davidson, there is mention of immigrants from the North-East, called Lonkius, several centuries before Christ. See "The Island of Formosa," p. 3, by James W. Davidson, F.R.G.S.

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propagate the Gospel till 1662. They lived on friendly terms with the natives, but were not so friendly with the Chinese, who already numbered 25,000, and were gradually flocking over from the mainland.

In 1661 the Chinese pirate Koxinga attacked the Dutch, driving them out. He and his descendants became rulers of the island, until his grandson, a mere boy, was obliged to yield himself and his dominion to the Emperor of China.

Thus in 1683 Formosa became part of "The Middle Kingdom." Most of the aborigines submitted to Chinese rule, adopted Chinese dress, including the pigtail, copied the methods of civilized agriculture, and even became worshippers of their conqueror's gods, so that a careless observer might readily take them for Chinese. The Chinese themselves often make this mistake. The native Formosan betrays himself, however, by his peculiar accent, and he sometimes keeps up the use of his own language when conversing with his own people. The homes of the aborigines are exactly like



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those of the Chinese, but are kept much more carefully, so far as I have observed. In matters of chastity, and in strength of character, they fall far short, and they fully share the Chinaman's love of opium. The Chinese, who in those southern latitudes are remarkably free from the vice of drunkenness, have often taken advantage of the natives' intemperance to filch their possessions. A Malay made drunk by his crafty tenant would good-humouredly agree to lower the rent of his land. Indeed, in some places, Christianity came just in time to hinder the inferior race from reducing itself to beggary. In published returns these civilized aborigines are included among the Chinese; but it used to be said that they numbered 200,000. They may be found living on the plains among the Chinese, or in the villages that run between the lower hills.

But the savages, about 100,000 strong, occupy about a half of Formosa, namely the eastern half, which is all mountain and clothed with forest-trees. From afar may be seen the bald patches on the higher slopes where

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those wild head-hunters plant their settlements and cultivate their millet; they live upon millet and the flesh of the deer. At times they make truce with the Chinese and exchange deers-horns for salt and gun-powder. Some of the tribes are less warlike and live at peace with their neighbours. In general the savages bear a good character for chastity and honesty, and one often hears it said that "Barbarians are better than men," which means "savages are better than Chinese." Mark the candour of this Chinese verdict, in spite of the fact that each day on the average, some ill-fated camphor-worker, or other Chinese, loses his life at the hands of the wild mountaineers.

No one is preaching to the hill folk, although there are more savages in Formosa than in all the New Hebrides islands. The missionaries are fully occupied with that wonderful race inhabiting the more level parts of the North and the great flat plain which forms the Western half of South Formosa. This plain is really part of the ocean bed, and has

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been heaved above the surface within comparatively recent times. Anchors are still found even on some of the lower hills; what was deep water in Dutch times is now too shallow for ships to float in; and if the floor of the sea were to rise a little higher a great tract might be laid bare. It will be understood that so flat a coast is very inhospitable and the harbours few; ships and even junks must usually anchor a mile or two from the beach.

The Chinese population numbers about 3,000,000. The land is crowded with villages, and every available part is cultivated. Where the water supply abounds, as it usually does, two crops of rice are grown each year, and in wide tracts, almost all the year round, the whole country is like a great shallow lake, cut into irregular squares by low and narrow earth-dykes. There is no room for grass-meadows, nor for hedges, nor even for roads; the narrow paths wind in and out and backwards and forwards upon the dykes and alongside the water courses.

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In the midst of this sea, but scarcely above it, lie the villages, just like islands, each island girt with a tall impenetrable fence of waving bamboos which hide and shelter from storm and night-marauders the clustering crowded homes of the busy Chinese farmers.

The houses are wattled, or built of mud, or of bricks that have not been fired, but only dried in the sun. They are roofed with thatch, or split bamboo, or with red tiles. The typical Chinese farm-house has a dining-room or guest-chamber in the centre with bedrooms opening from it on each side. At one of the gables there is commonly a lower building in which food is prepared, and, to save trouble, the family often take their meals there. Larger houses have still the arrangement of three rooms in a row, and facing the South, if possible; but two arms are added, that is to say, two long low buildings run out at right angles to the main building so as to form the three sides of a square, and enclose a court which remains open on its southern side. In some of these secondary buildings married sons with

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their families may be housed, while in others the people often keep their cattle, and their mill for hulling the rice.

The dining-room is furnished with cheap but serviceable furniture, a table against the wall that faces the door, another in the centre of the room, and a row of bamboo chairs, or else a bench, ranged along each of the side walls. On the high table, or mantel-piece, against the wall, are placed the ancestral tablets, and nailed to the wall, above this table, one usually finds a scroll with representations of the goddess of mercy (Kwan-im) and her attendants, and of other deities. Sometimes there are little images of wood or clay upon the table, but the paper scroll is cheaper and more comprehensive. Farm implements and other lumber are apt to spoil the general appearance of things; the high table is covered with dust, and upon the plastered or unplastered walls cobwebs abound. It does not do to take it for granted that every seat will be found clean, and a Chinaman, when he makes a call, often takes the pre-

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caution of passing his hand over the surface before he sits down; his head-cloth or turban, is ready to serve as duster or towel, if required. The principal room is lighted by the door, which, facing the South, may usually be left wide open. The windows, being, as a rule, unglazed, must be small in size; if large, they would admit too much cold air, and during inclement weather they must be closed with an ingenious sliding frame, a duplicate of the close-barred window-frame, or, as in poorer houses, with thin paper pasted over them, or simply with a handful of straw. The Chinese dread the cold wind, and wide openings are apt to give access to thieves who dig through and steal. The bedrooms are very dark and cheerless, and often blocked with lumber. Their principal furniture is a well-made wooden bed-stead, or a cheaper one of bamboo, a chair or a bench, and perhaps a little table with drawers, in which important documents or valuables are kept under lock and key, also a plain or carved and decorated washing-stand, likewise provided with drawers.

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The kitchens are furnished with large rice boilers such as we boil clothes in; wood, or sticks gathered by the children, or grass cut from the hill-sides, is the fuel; and the smoke is carried off by a chimney. There is often a portable charcoal stove, on which a kettle or an earthen pot may be placed. There is a bamboo cupboard, in the upper part of which are kept provisions, pork, salt fish, goat-mutton, and vegetables, open to the air, but barred against cats and dogs; while below there is a rack for bowls and chop-sticks. The top of this cupboard serves as a table; and very likely a large knife or chopper, with a wooden block, will be found lying on it, or on a corner of the rice-boiler. There is a cleaver for the wood, and a sort of flat spoon of iron or brass for frying purposes. One large earthen jar holds the water that has been drawn from the well. It has a cover to exclude the dust, and, ready to hand, there is a ladle made from a gourd or a piece of wood; this lies on the top, or floats in the water. Should the water be muddy, a piece of alum

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is sometimes used for clarifying it. Into another jar are thrown the dish-water and the scraps as well as the water in which the uncooked rice has been washed; this mixture feeds the pigs, and nothing is lost. Under the eaves are smaller jars containing pickled turnips. All the floors are of mud or of tiles.

In one of the outhouses the cattle are stalled. They are kept, not for their milk, which feeds the calves, nor for their flesh, which is little esteemed, but for the work of ploughing and harrowing. No light task: they plough and harrow, and plough and harrow again, their flooded fields, till earth and water are mixed into a sort of pea-soup on which the farmers float their tubs containing the young rice plants taken from the seed-beds, while they thrust them in by threes or by fives, and rapidly stud their pond-like acres with living green.

But it is not my purpose to go through the process of rice farming, the weary kneeling in the cold water at the opening of the year, or the tiresome weeding and second weeding when the still weather comes, and the fierce sun beats

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down on bare and scorched and blackened shoulders, nor to tell of the anxious season when the plants begin to flower, and everything depends on the right proportions of sun and rain and dew. Nor will I describe the frightsome days when the typhoons lash the grain and threaten to wreck in one short hour the toil of months, or the unresting harvest week when the hired helpers ply the sickle and frantically dash the heads of rice against the ladder in the grain-tub, all bustling to and fro as if some invisible taskmaster were driving them, till at last the sudden sunset ends their toil, and the women, who have been raking and turning and sunning the grain on the wide village mud floor, draw each household's portion together in one great conical heap, and cover it up with coats of straw ere the heavy dew comes down. It is a busy round, and before the first harvest is complete the ploughs are preparing for the second planting, and the seed-bed, well manured, shows even now a braird of exquisite green.

Yet there are pauses in the life of the rice-

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HARROWING THE FLOODED FIELD.

PLANTING RICE.

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farmer, whereas those who are worse supplied with water are forced to till mixed fields, some of rice, and some of sweet potatoes and earth-nuts, and some of sugar-cane, or of indigo: such people have ever some task waiting for them; theirs is a harder lot with less return for their labour. The women, too, must be weeding or digging up the crops, and do not enjoy the leisurely life which is the portion of their sisters on the rice-lands.

The mountains of the East rise abruptly from the plain, and form a region apart, unknown. Range upon range they rise, till their loftiest peaks rival the Alps, and Mount Morison's top is reckoned nearly 14,000 feet above the level of the sea. Yet even at such an altitude snow will not lie, except, perhaps, for a few days in January or February. The people do not understand what to make of the unwonted whiteness, and declare that the god of the earth is beating silver. But anyone can tell the meaning of those light blue clouds of smoke. It is there that the adventurous camphor-workers are felling the trees. With a

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curious gouge-like adze they are cutting the wood into little thin chips, the size of a man's finger, that they may be put into the still and yield their fragrant essence.

Danger is never far from those camphor-workers. At any moment the prowling head-hunters may take them unawares. As the saying goes, every pound of camphor costs a drop of human blood.

Nearer the plain country, and upon the lower slopes, Chinese cultivate pine-apples, and there are groves of orange trees, mango trees, bananas, and other fruits. The most picturesque sight is the little forest of betel-nut palms.

In the North, where the climate is moist all the year round, there are tea plantations on the hill slopes. In other regions there is a crop of bearded winter wheat or of barley, with scare-crows all about, and clappers turned by tiny windmills, and children sheltering themselves in little booths, while they shout at the sparrows, or make a din on cast-off pots and pans. Older children are away to the river-

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beds to gather sticks, or up the hill-sides cutting grass for fuel, or lopping off branches from the trees, which still maintain the unequal contest, and doggedly uplift their maimed and stunted stems. And sturdy little fellows are leading the cattle by the nose along the narrow grassy dykes that separate the rice-fields, or away to those strange stony hillocks, and in and out among those mounds that partly hide the bulky coffins in which the bones of their fathers rest.

I need say little of the towns. Most of the people of Formosa live in the country. As the country has no roads, so the cities have no streets, only lanes. I well remember the surprise that I felt when first I climbed up the bank of a river and stepped into what appeared to be a narrow passage. Expecting to reach a thoroughfare, I found myself, by and by, in another passage, and gradually discovered that all the passages were streets, and all the streets were passages. When I was carried in a sedan-chair through the city of Canton I almost cried out to see how we jostled and crushed and bruised the

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men and women as we forced our way through. Sir Frederick Treves, although he too much darkens his picture, speaks not unaptly of the tunnel-like character of a typical Chinese street. The shops are not very unlike our own; but the open fronts are unglazed. The cloth shops, with their well-arranged and bright-coloured goods, present the finest appearance, and at night, with their numerous paraffin lamps, they are surprisingly well lighted. Then there are the grocers' shops: idolatrous paper money and idolatrous candles are the goods most prominently displayed. The bakers' shops are few and ill-supplied; there are no loaves, and cakes and scones are seldom used. Apothecaries are not hard to find; they deal in the sort of medicines that were common with us one hundred and fifty years ago. And I must not forget to mention shops for the sale of earthenware and china.

Of course there are numerous restaurants where one may have hard or soft boiled rice, and different sorts of vermicelli, not to mention meat balls, and hard-boiled ducks' eggs, little salt fish, boiled but unsweetened ginger, and a

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great variety of cooked vegetables. Many of the shops are factories as well. Thus there are the workshops where bamboo beds are made, and bamboo chairs and stools. There are cabinet makers too, and coopers making tubs, also blacksmiths, brass-smiths, tinsmiths, and silversmiths. In short almost every kind of craft is practised and almost every trade is carried on.

. . . . .

In this manner, age after age, the orderly and strangely ingenious life of the Chinese has been going on, till at last, in 1895, there bursts on them and presses on them another civilization, that of the nineteenth century in its peculiar Japanese form. I need not attempt to tell how, at the end of the war with China, Japan received for indemnity this island of Taiwan, as Chinese and Japanese name it, and how, after a sharp but uneven contest, the victors made it their own, while Chinese governors and magistrates fled across the sea.

On a December morning of that same year I first approached the shores; it was a December morning, but how unpleasantly warm. I

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say "*approached* the shores," for the ships must lie so far out from the port of Anping, and the sandy plain is so low and flat, that, even when the anchor is down, one would fancy oneself still in mid-ocean, were it not that the cargo-boats and the bamboo rafts heave up and down at the steamer's sides, and far away one can see the great billows breaking on the bar. It is strange to sit half-sheltered in a large tub laid upon the raft, with the sea rushing and seething between the stems, and the waves tumbling all around so that one feels as if the tub would float off on a voyage of its own, until on a sudden the watchful Chinese have safely steered across the sounding shallows, and into the quiet water beyond. As soon as the shore was reached there appeared the custom-house officers with their Western uniforms and swords, and the bare plain was dotted with soldiers marching up and down. The city gates were guarded by soldiers. Beneath the heavy archway all hats must be taken off, and the fearful Chinese unwillingly removed their blue head-cloths and

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METHOD OF LANDING IN SOUTH FORMOSA.

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dropped their queues. In the narrow street I had to stand aside to let a horseman pass.

When, a month later, Dr Landsborough and I made a journey through the island, we found everything quiet enough; but some of the buildings bore the marks of bullets, and some towns were blackened ruins. We heard people discuss the question whether we were men or women. The Japanese were already opening a new road, not indeed a road, but a broad, straight path. A flat monotonous journey it was, all sand and sugar-canes and low unfriendly screw-pines, with here and there a great shady banyan tree—at its foot, nestling against its trunk, a little idol-shrine, and all around burden-bearers setting down their loads with a sigh of relief, while the stall-keepers, with their portable stoves and pots and kettles, invited them to partake of their sugared rice-porridge, or of various drinks and jellies.

Many of the rivers, from January to December, are black and turbid, a strange muddy mixture, as if a thousand water-buffaloes had been stirring their unknown depths. It is only



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when the traveller gets half-way north and near Chang-wha that he begins to enjoy the sight of limpid streams.

Of course the gates of Chang-wha city were closed by night and guarded by day, no Chinese passing through without displaying some token or guarantee. In the first days of the Japanese occupation, the Christians from the country used to present their hymn-books, which the sentinels regarded as sufficient passport.

A year later, when we made the same journey, the general appearance was as before, yet all was changed. The robbers, who in the era of Chinese rule had issued ever and anon from their retreats in the lower hills, were now beginning to pluck up fresh courage, and had ventured to attack the intruders.

The Japanese made matters worse by the reckless burning of villages, confounding the innocent with the guilty; the feeling of bitterness was fomented, and harmless peasants became homeless and desperate rebels. At each stage of the journey we had to make secret inquiries as to the state of the road.

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Next year matters were even worse. By this time the Japanese authorities had laid a miniature railway for a distance of 40 miles north of Tainan, and along the slender rails little cars for passengers and goods were slowly pushed by Chinese coolies. But within the first dozen miles of our winter's journey we were forsaken by most of our men. Were they afraid of the perils of the path? It is not the way of Chinese to desert one in the midst of any undertaking.

We had got but four miles out of the city when from among the bushes there emerged a robber's spy. "Who are you and whither bound?" was his query. Our answer satisfied him; he disappeared among the screw-pines, and all was still, save for the uneasy murmur of the slow-revolving wheels. It was just as he crossed such a stream as this some months ago that our student friend, Precious Pearl, was shot in the leg by the robbers. Mounted on a Japanese horse, he was riding home to his brother's funeral, when the rebels, taking him for a Japanese, opened their fire upon him.

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Away to their fastness in the hills they hurried him, and then sent a message to his father offering to release him for the sum of £70. Meantime they were besieged in their stronghold by the Japanese, and were left with but few provisions. After many an ineffectual assault, the enemy prevailed; the robbers retreated, dragging Precious Pearl along with them. He lay in a ditch for many days, starving and half-dead. "Our Saviour fasted for forty days," as he expressed it, "but I for fifty." At last he espied a Japanese soldier poking about in search of ducks or fowls. Our friend had not strength to shout; he held up his hand and moved his fingers. The soldier took him for a robber, and brought him to the commanding officer. There was no one to interpret; but in Chinese writing, which the Japanese understand, the student succeeded in explaining himself. The officer had him carried home; thence some days later he was brought to the Christian hospital in Chang-wha. He recovered of his wound, but the long fasting and exposure had been too

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much for him, and he could not withstand the cold of the fierce north wind. On a bright, blustering day he breathed his last.

Well, that is the kind of gully in which our friend was taken prisoner. And there, again, is a place where a robbery was committed just a few weeks ago.

The skies are gloomy, and the north wind is bringing with it a steady, soaking rain. A company of Japanese, with an escort of armed police, are hasting to reach the next stage before nightfall, and we are left behind. A river has to be crossed, and no one knows how to manage the raft. A waggon laden with clothes and stores goes plump into the river. We fish it out and get ashore, but the sand of the river-plain clogs the wheels, and darkness comes apace. There is no sound save that of our slow, uneasy motion. At last, with a heavy rumble, we push our way across the long trestle bridge and into the station. Late and wet and tired, we lodge as best we can in a dirty inn. Before noon next day the weather mends. We may take a good look

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at the Japanese station-master, for before we pass this way again on one of these small waggons, he too will have fallen before the guns of the bold banditti. There are many lonely stretches on this road, long withered grass and low screw-pines, sand and mud and sullen streams. Just here is a steep ascent, with a shallow cutting through the mound. A month or two ago, as the waggon-coolies paused to take breath, down came the robbers, and the passengers, five Japanese male nurses and police, were never heard of more. Further north we met two Japanese travellers, their faces flushed, their garments dishevelled; with wild gesticulations and in an unknown tongue, they tried to warn us of danger, but we went forward and came to no harm.

A few days later, when the shades of evening began to fall, a smooth-spoken man joined our company. We met two chair-bearers with an empty sedan; the leader raised one finger to his lips, and off like a shot went our comrade.

Those times were stirring and sorrowful;

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there was terror on every side. In some parts of the country it was not possible to travel; in other places ourselves and our friends had narrow escapes. Once the Rev. Thomas Barclay and his wife were journeying in the south when some men, fear in their eyes, came rushing back, and our friends, not too soon, turned with them. One morning, after the Christians had made careful enquiry, I set out on a journey from one church to a neighbouring one, resolved to try the shorter but more dangerous route. We crossed the first branches of the stream in safety and were marching through the screw-pine thickets and fields of sugar-cane, when my Christian burden-bearer looked back and whispered something which I did not catch, but his face was eloquent. "Robbers," he said, and through the bush I saw a fellow crouching; I could have struck him with my umbrella. He had his gun pointed at me, and close at hand there was another robber standing, with three more among the sugar-cane. "Don't," said my Christian friend; and they let us

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pass, having discovered, as we surmised, that I was a missionary.

In making our journeys we constantly depended on information gleaned from friendly Chinese with whom our trusty Christians took cautious counsel. I shall never forget the way in which two strangers thrust their warnings upon me. Having ascertained, as we supposed, that the path was fairly safe, a Christian Chinese and I set off in the direction of "Two Woods" and "Newton," some 20 miles south. We had tramped half the distance when we met two elderly strangers. "Whither bound?" they enquired. "Southwards," I replied, for in troublous times it is best not to be too precise. "You must not, you must not," was the answer, and one of the strangers stretched out his hand and shook the palm in my face, as Chinese do when they forbid an action or refuse a boon. "No matter," I said. "You must not," he responded with added emphasis. "But we are not Japanese," we urged, "and shall not come to harm." "You must not," they still replied; "Japanese or Chinese,

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it is all the same. At the ford down there they are robbing all who cross." We warmly thanked those courteous passengers for their advice, and telling them that we would at least go forward to the next market-town, we bade them good-bye. At the next town, as it happened, we fell in with a dozen burden-bearers from "Deermouth," and in their company, for they were going in the same direction, we crossed safely through the dusty gloom of that weird, wind-swept desert, all mud and sand, bushes and rank grass, and inky streams.

Even robbers, at least in China, are not without compassion. A student crossing a stream was stripped of some of his clothing and money. But the banditti allowed him to keep his umbrella, for the sun was hot, and they left him with cash sufficient to bring him to his journey's end.

The people were to be pitied, on the one hand dreading the robbers, on the other the Japanese. At night one could hear the cries of the cottagers as their cattle were driven

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away, and the sufferers shouted for help that none ventured to afford. In places where Christians lived, the sentinels, whose turn it was to keep guard, stole in to our evening assemblies with guns in hand, and at the sound of a dog's bark slipped quietly out again. Or our prayer-meeting was broken up, and the young men hasted to gird themselves with belts of cartridges and ran for their rifles. As for the farmers, if they re-resisted they suffered the more. Just outside the eastern gate of Chang-wha city a farmer tried to hinder the spoiling of his goods. A shot passed through his body and then struck his brother; in a few hours both were dead. Some of the country folk could not venture to sleep indoors, but lay in booths guarding their fields, or crouched on cold winter nights under shelter of the dense screw-pines.

The shopkeepers were not safe. Lok-kang was sacked and partly burned. Even in Chang-wha the bullets have whistled over our heads, and bands of fifty or sixty have battered in the doors and shutters of the cloth-shops,

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carrying off rich plunder in baskets brought for the purpose; the Japanese heard the noise, but neither dared, nor perhaps cared, to interfere. One day there was a sound as of shots fired in quick succession. Surely, we thought, an army of rebels have come to sack the town; all faces grew pale with fear. It was only a magazine on fire, the cartridges exploding one by one.

It is not to be supposed that the magistrates were sitting in idleness. Japanese soldiers scoured the country; guilty and innocent suffered from their vengeance.

The Christians sometimes saved their lives by producing their hymn-books. In one place they arrested a man on a charge of being a robber. "I am no robber," he protested, "I am a Christian." "What evidence do you offer?" He produced his hymn-book. "Well," said the police, "if you are a Christian you will be able to read your book." They opened at one place, then at another. He read to their satisfaction. "You are an honest fellow," they decreed, and without more

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ado they let him go. They caught another man. He also professed to be a Christian; he also produced a hymn-book. "Read this," they cried; but he was silent. "Read that," but he was speechless. Off with his head! He was a robber pretending to be a Christian.

Away in the South some of the elders were walking together to attend a meeting of Presbytery, the first meeting of the kind that had ever been held. It was about New-Year time, when robbers like to acquire some funds in view of the general festivities. The Japanese police took our worthy office-bearers for a band of thieves, and brought them before the magistrates. "We are Christians," they pleaded, "and bound for a meeting of Church-court." "If that be so," said his lordship, "you can doubtless repeat the names of the twelve Apostles." They passed the examination, and went their way.

Christians were seldom interfered with. The magistrates knew very well what sort of character they bore, and they have even urged our preachers to diligence, so that the people

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might be brought over to a quiet and peaceable life. But justice was very summary, and mistakes were sometimes made. The authorities entered the house of a Christian, and finding one or two foreign clocks in his house, suspected him of having stolen them. He was led to judgment. He sat, or knelt, starving and faint. Someone took pity on him, and brought him a bowl of rice. Even then he did not forget to ask a blessing on God's bounty. This grace before meat cost him his life. The Chinese headman, hating his Christianity, refused to bear witness to his character, and so, that same day, while the other suspects were released, the Christian was put to death.

The higher officials desired to govern for the welfare of the people, and they were ready to profit by experience. Gradually they became better acquainted with the Chinese, and some of the police became familiar with the language of the country. They adopted something like Chinese methods, appointing heads of ten families to be responsible for their good behaviour; above these they set heads of a

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hundred, and above them higher officials still.

Robbers were invited to surrender upon a promise of pardon, and many became respectable citizens. Thus there was a spell of comparative quiet, followed again, shortly after the Boxer movement in China, by a great outburst of disorder. Then came a "killing time"; the Japanese had come to know how to employ detectives, both Japanese and Chinese; an able governor was at the helm; and by fair means and foul the rebel-robbers were destroyed. Suddenly there emerged a state of quiet and security such as has not been known in all the history of the island.

In the autumn of 1902 I heard for the last time the shouts and cries that attend a midnight assault on a farmyard. And now the barriers that used to impede one's entrance into a village after dark are all removed. The booths in the fields are allowed to decay; the Japanese watchtowers fall into ruin. Farm gates are left unbarred, and even the house doors are not always carefully closed. Chinese, indeed,

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are a little prone to an excess of confidence when danger seems past, and the gates that we found most watchfully secured in years gone by were allowed to rot, and the inner doors to stand wide open. Thus, at the country church of Townheadhill, a covetous person, taking heart of grace, stepped in and carried off lamps and table.

During all those years the Japanese were, of course, occupied with various schemes and undertakings. They were compelling the people to broaden and straighten the paths. Even now one cannot speak of roads; Macadam is a stranger to the country; but, in fine weather, on many of the paths, it is possible to bicycle, if one takes the trouble to lift the bicycle over ditches, bamboo bridges, barriers for pigs, and other obstructions. Letters are delivered in almost every village, and from the remotest quarters they may, of course, be posted to every part of the world. Telegraph and telephone wires in Formosa are almost as common as in Scotland. Under Chinese rule there was a railway in the

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north-west corner of the land; this has been straightened and improved and extended until North and South are joined.

But the most striking changes are in the towns and cities. The Japanese have cut a few broad streets, north and south, and east and west, right through the larger towns, while in the smaller they have widened and altered the main avenues. Jin-rick-shas (man-strength carriages), or man-drawn carriages, are quite common in the larger towns, as in Japan. Chinese who own property on the new thoroughfares—half of their shops and houses cut away at a blow—have been obliged to find room by adding second storeys, and some of the streets now present a handsome and singularly picturesque appearance.

Yet we must not make too much of these alterations. Chinese streets are not ill-paved; they would put to shame our pavements as they were a few hundred years ago. And, in warm weather, narrow dark lanes yield welcome shade.

A prominent feature in Japanese arrange-

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ments is the establishment of large covered market-places for the sale of meat, fish, vegetables, rice, and eatables in general. The Chinese, in their free and easy fashion, liked to sell such things, cooked or raw, at temple gates, and here and there along the lines of traffic. When they persisted in such practices, they got many a cuff or kick from the Japanese police; and when the householders left their house-fronts unswept, they suffered in like manner. Nowadays the people have grown somewhat used to the Japanese ways, and the more intelligent begin to perceive that there is a virtue in order and cleanliness.

This brings me to the subject of Education. The Chinese are an eminently reasonable people, and the Japanese, by various means, have endeavoured, not without success, to instruct public opinion. The Japanese authorities have a wise way of calling together the leading citizens in order to consult and enlighten them. They have invited, or rather, sometimes, it must be acknowledged, have compelled them to join certain societies. Thus all doctors, whether



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practising medicine after Chinese or after European methods, must attend the meetings of a medical society one Sunday each month to hear a discourse from a Japanese physician; and those who distinguish themselves in their efforts to promote the public health are rewarded by the authorities. Again, there are agricultural societies, with shows and prizes, and experimental gardens proving what can be done when the best seeds and fertilizers are employed. At one of the agricultural shows, the chief magistrate, through an interpreter, suggested that, when I moved about the country preaching, I should exhort the villagers to adopt the newer methods.

So much for the education of grown and elderly men.

For the younger generation free schools are established in all towns, and the children are urged to attend. Here some 20,000 children, mostly boys, learn to speak a little Japanese, and, with difficulty, for language hinders, they acquire the rudiments of general knowledge. In larger cities there are high schools where

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some real advance is made, and in the Capital young men may study agriculture or medicine, or prepare themselves for the Civil Service. A few qualified doctors, besides those trained in missionary hospitals, are now scattered over the country.

The teacher and his scholars cherish kindly thoughts of one another, and this educational work undoubtedly tends to promote a friendlier feeling between the Chinese and their present rulers.

But it is not easy for different races to mingle. As far as possible, I would fain leave every people to govern itself. I have known too much of the miscarriage of justice in Singapore, and have seen and heard too much of innocent suffering in Formosa, to be able to regard an alien government as anything better than a makeshift and necessary evil.

The Chinese are no doubt a people easily controlled; but, with justice, they are proud of their long and extraordinary history, and of their capacities and virtues and great institutions; naturally they despise the little island

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empire to which from of old they taught so many lessons. The Japanese, on the other hand, who but yesterday were as the Chinese, only in many respects somewhat more primitive, are now scorning their venerable mother, or step-mother, for her old-fashioned backward manners.

Each nation has its merits and corresponding defects. The Japanese are quick, bright, gay, yet not without a touch of melancholy. Their versatility is apt to mean fickleness; their proud, romantic, ideal disposition makes them sensitive and easily offended. The Chinese are slow, but eminently reliable, sober, but good-humoured. They are patient and persevering, observant and ingenious. In medicine and science and all the arts they will do excellently by and by. No need to talk of their business capacity. They are content with small profits if they can secure their customers. Common sense is the special characteristic of the Chinese. They have little romance or poetry in their disposition: philosophy is alien to their nature, though the teaching of wonderful old Lao-tze,

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too good for this poor world, is worthy of lasting praise and reverence. They are seldom touched by strong emotion; yet they are readily moved to mirth, and to tears they are no strangers; aged mothers, bereft of their children, have often wept themselves blind. They are comparatively unsympathetic, yet exceedingly hospitable, ready to show kindness, and very generous with their hard-earned money. They are tolerant of pain in themselves, and apt to be indifferent to the sufferings of others; but they are free from that mischief-loving spirit which takes pleasure in wanton inhumanity. One does not find that boys delight in teasing and tormenting one another as British children do.

The description and illustration of Chinese character is not, however, my present aim. I simply wish to guard against the notion that, a dozen years ago, Formosa was a rude country, and that now at length it is becoming civilized. When our ancestors were mere barbarians, Chinese farmers and farmers' little children knew how to behave as gentlemen. Many

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talk about the opening up of a country, as if a locomotive running to and fro could somehow transform the life of a nation; or as if, when the merchants begin to send their camphor and tea and sugar across the ocean, importing American petroleum and flour, and German lamps, and British cloth and milk and sugar-mills, straightway the old things passed and all became new.

The foreigners, to be sure, are grateful for the railway and the post-office, and admire the skill with which the Government have reduced and almost abolished violent crime; yet even for them life nowadays is much as it used to be.

As for the Chinese, whether in town or country, they laugh and weep as they did a thousand years ago; they have the same cares, the same anxieties about crops and business, the same planning to find wives for their sons and husbands for their daughters, the same dread of demons and offended spirits, the same longing for wealth and sons and honour and length of days, the same vague fear of death. The new thing in Formosa is, not a little modification in

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their surroundings, a slight change in their customs, a shortening of their coats, a lengthening of their trousers, a tightening of their sleeves, some smattering of knowledge, a handful of foreign phrases, a taste of science, a touch of Agnosticism. What makes things new is the new heart, and what brings joy to men and angels is that here and there and in corners most remote, in a thousand villages and towns, Chinese and Aborigines alike begin to love a new Name, and are learning to sing a new song.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE CHARACTER AND CONDUCT OF A HEATHEN PEOPLE: CHINESE AND BRITISH COMPARED

How are we to express the difference between a Heathen and a Christian people, between China and Europe, between Formosa and Great Britain? It might be thought easy to draw some strong contrasts; but the more one reflects upon the matter the more difficult it seems to make any statement at once truthful and clear.

A stranger has not long arrived in the East before he forms the opinion, that, to put it from a dogmatic Christian's point of view, the Heathen Chinese are disappointingly good. And, as years go by, this impression will, in many respects, be deepened rather than effaced.

To begin with the most external aspects of the subject, on Chinese streets there are but few painful sights and sounds. An impartial



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observer will perhaps judge that the Chinese are not a cruel people. Of course some one will be ready to remark that we are forgetting all about Chinese punishments. I frankly confess that I happen to have lived in a Chinese land under Japanese rule; I scarcely know whether to regard this as hindering or helping a just conclusion. It is to be remarked that punishments are a matter of government, and do not necessarily, or precisely, express the character of a people. Up to the time of the Reformation, and for long afterwards, the punishments of the West were cruel, so cruel that one cannot even bear to mention them; it is only a few generations ago that we got rid of our methods of barbarism; but we are not to infer that the British have a ferocious disposition.

I have tried to judge by watching, as far as possible, the daily conduct of men and women and children in hundreds of towns and villages. There are elements in the Chinese nature that tend to make them less *wantonly* cruel than some other races. They are not a people of strong passions and sensibilities; they are

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unimaginative, much influenced by motives of prudence, with a well-known love of what is useful; they are remarkably free from the boisterous mischief-loving spirit that characterizes our more romantic disposition. Hence they are very careful of their domestic animals. The little herd-boys watch over the water-buffaloes with motherly care, plastering them with mud to keep them cool, and fanning the flies away. Even the pigs, turned upside down and carried to market with their four legs tied together in somewhat painful fashion, are nevertheless shielded from the sun's fierce rays by the bough of a tree laid upon their bodies; the Chinese would never let them suffer in such a way as to interfere with their market value. On the other hand, when they are cruel, it is perhaps with the object of gaining something by their cruelty—I do not speak from observation,—or they are cruel with the cruelty of indifference; Chinese inhumanity to birds and beasts and creeping things usually comes under this head; the children are peculiarly fond of using mice, birds, and insects,

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as playthings, without ever asking whether their sport gives pain to their living toys.

No doubt, the Chinese, very tolerant of discomfort and suffering in their own bodies, are wonderfully indifferent to suffering in others. They are unsympathetic, and, like children in the West, are apt sometimes to find amusement in distress and cries of pain. I have seen a woman laugh when her husband winced under the surgeon's knife. On the other hand, I have known of a ten-year-old boy, when his mother seemed dangerously ill, throwing himself on the ground and writhing in his agony. Chinese laughter may sometimes be misunderstood: on one occasion my companion laughed, simply because he was startled at a clap of thunder from a clear sky. The favourite proof of the heartlessness of the Chinese is derived from their disregard of the drowning. But perhaps, after reading some illustrative stories, one happens to remember that, within living memory, the Shetlanders were unwilling to rescue a drowning person, from the superstitious fear that the

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Spirit of the Deep, robbed of his prey, would demand the rescuer's life within a twelvemonth. And, on making enquiries of the Chinese, one ascertains that they are influenced by similar superstitious terrors. The Chinese, too, by the way, have the idea that if a person be drowned in a pool, the soul, thus imprisoned, is on the watch to entice a second person into the water, in order that, life exchanged for life, the soul of the first victim may make his escape.

If a Chinese see a sick or wounded person by the roadside, he probably will not play the part of the Good Samaritan:

> "The wayside corpse
> No man will touch";

for very good reasons, as he thinks; if he took any interest in the matter, some one would probably charge him with having inflicted the wounds, or caused the sickness.

From all this, it will be seen (shall we say?) that those Heathen, if not cruel, are at least selfish. And indeed some instances of their selfishness appear very surprising. For example

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—but the readers of "Lorna Doone" may recall something similar of Devonshire—when a passenger is set upon by robbers he must not fancy that other passengers within hail have only to be called in order to come to the rescue. They prefer to look after themselves. Even if in numbers they outweigh the enemy, they dread his revenge at a future day. I have fallen in with a company of thieves when a village was close at hand; it would have been idle to hope that the villagers would flock to our defence.

Is this, after all, astonishing? In Singapore a foreigner was informed by his loyal servant of a housebreaking plot. The master took the proper measures, and also protected his servant from danger by forbidding him to go beyond the doors. Vain precaution; at length, danger presumably past, the servant issued forth from his city of refuge, only to lose his life.

I remember how once, when I would fain have broken out in righteous indignation at the heartlessness of the Chinese, I was compelled to burn with silent shame. One day of lashing

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storm, as I sat in an upper room in Singapore, I heard the cry "Brown-haired," and guessed that some of my fellow-countrymen had fallen out with the Chinese. When I reached the door I found some American marines passing by, and, near the edge of the pavement, a crowd of Chinese looking into the deep open drain, where an old street-vendor lay drowned or drowning. Every one was ready to explain how he got there; not one offered to help him out. My first thought was a half-wish that he might turn out positively dead, and I might thus be saved the dirty job of getting into the foul ditch to lift him from it. Presently I got my servant to bring ropes, and, as the old fellow had still some strength and consciousness left, we raised him without needing ourselves to go down. He was a piteous sight, shivering and dazed, with a great cut in his head, from which the blood flowed, mingling with the filth that covered him.

My servant declared that, had we not intervened, the old man would have perished in the midst of that great city, and surrounded by

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fellow-Chinese who knew him intimately; for not one of them would touch him, lest perchance the Malay police should charge them with assault, or at least require them to bear witness in court as to the cause of the mishap, and so keep them for a day or two from their customary avocations. The Chinese shopkeeper, at whose door his aged fellow-countryman carried on his daily business, refused to admit that he had fallen into the drain at that point, though every one knew that the occurrence took place just there, and that afterwards the old stall-keeper had been carried by the surging stream a hundred yards further down. Of course this shop-keeper wished to make perfectly sure that he should not in the remotest degree be judged responsible.

And now what had the American marines to do with it? One of them, buying sweetmeats from the street-vendor, had offered too low a price; the old Chinese remonstrated, whereupon the marine struck him so that he fell, or pushed him into the ditch. It was "only a Chinaman," and neither he nor any of his comrades

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would take the trouble to rescue him. Thus East and West were one in heartless self-regard.

On the whole the Chinese must, I think, be acquitted of the charge of cruelty; but it is impossible to deny that they are somewhat callous; the sight of distress is apt to leave them unmoved. A peculiarity of Chinese character, not quite easily understood, is a remarkable indifference to the feelings of others: they are careless of wounding one another's feelings. They well understand the art of flattery, either direct, or indirect, as when they make complimentary remarks which they wish to be overheard. But, as if flattering speech were a dress to be put on or laid aside, they often tell the truth with the most painful bluntness. A Chinese preacher may easily hear, or overhear, the remark that if his predecessor had remained in office the congregation would long ago have become much more flourishing than it now is. If the people are crowding around a foreigner, and a Japanese policeman is standing by, they will say aloud that the British are much better than the

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Japanese. By and by that same foreigner may find himself disparaged by some other crowd who contrast his speech and abilities and disposition with those of his fellow-traveller. Such instances might be multiplied.

Any one who watches Chinese children will be struck with the remarkable absence of mischievous cruelty in their conduct, and, upon the whole, with the gentle kindness of the elder to the younger. They are quarrelsome —perhaps not more so than British bairns— but their quarrels end in words, or a few slaps or pinches; they scarcely ever fight, nor does one hear of underhand revenge. I have not observed, but once or twice, any sort of bullying behaviour. The ways of brothers to their little sisters, and of sisters to their little brothers, are often very beautiful.

Family affection among Heathen Chinese is undoubtedly less strong than among ourselves. How far this difference is a matter of temperament, how far due to the artificial character of the marriage bond in the East, and how far to the absence of the deepening and intensifying



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influence of Christianity, it is hard to judge. Everyone knows that Chinese parents are very fond of their children, whether boys or girls. They prefer sons: a people with a patriarchal system must inevitably prefer sons; for the boys remain, with their children and children's children, under the family roof, to care for their parents in old age, and to offer food and paper-money and incense after their decease. In the nature of the case, by force of circumstances, the daughters are unfilial; they are costly to rear, and just when they might be of some service, they are married to mere strangers, perhaps in a remote village, their own parents seeing little more of them. But the preference for sons, and the more or less frequent strangling of daughters at birth, do not usually mean unkindness to those who are allowed to grow up. (Of course here, as at every point, exceptions might be named, *e.g.*, heartless parents grudging the trouble and expense of bringing their little daughters to the hospital for healing.) Often I have watched fathers fondling their little lassies in their arms, while listening to the

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preaching of the Gospel, or lifting them to their shoulders for a better view of the uncouth foreigner.

And it must by no means be thought that the women of China are groaning under oppression, or that their life is sorrow from the cradle to the grave, or that they welcome the Gospel as a means of deliverance from social bondage. True enough, the women are in a state of subjection; but, indeed, in the patriarchal family, all the members are subordinate to the one head, and often the sons have scarcely anything that they can call their own. The bond between husband and wife, with some notable exceptions, is not a remarkably close and loving one. How could it be? Chinese propriety insists that a man should marry, or rather that his parents should marry for him, a woman whom he has never seen. Thus the wife becomes something like a confidential servant. If she is oppressed, it is chiefly by her mother-in-law: her time for lording it over her daughters-in-law will come by and by. Her husband sometimes beats her; but the blows

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are not all on one side. There is one respect in which Chinese women, with bound feet, if they live in a rice-growing region, have a great advantage over their sisters in the West. When they have cooked the rice and vegetables, cleaned the bowls and chopsticks, and washed the family clothes, there is little work left for them to do, except to look after the children. The marketing is almost all done by the men. Altogether, women, in such circumstances, enjoy a great deal of leisure, and may well be the envy of toiling mothers at Home. And although their bound feet hinder locomotion, yet when they go a journey they may enjoy the costly luxury of a ride in a sedan-chair, while the husband trudges on foot behind. Of course, where crops are grown on dry fields, even small-footed women are expected to take their share in weeding and similar tasks; in such cases they are as busy as the men, though still all the heavier burdens fall on the stronger sex.

Again, it is advisable to distinguish between what is essential and what is a matter of social

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custom. Both in the East and in the West the father is the head of the house. This being so, the Chinese thinks that his way of putting women last in everything is the natural and consistent arrangement; it is not easy for him to understand that in Western social ceremonies women are placed first, not by way of acknowledging their superiority, but because the stronger sex refuses to take advantage of its superior strength, and freely yields what the weaker sex has not the power to demand. Perhaps when the Chinese become Christianized they will not adopt the peculiar social order of the West. What is essential is that they should abandon the contempt for women which too much prevails among them.

It is noticeable that the Chinese, while somewhat despising women, have not the contempt for women's work that prevails among men in the West. A man will cook the rice, wash his clothes, dandle or wash his children, stay off his work to nurse his sick wife, and, in short, act a woman's part, without the least trace of awkwardness or bashfulness. And again, in

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fairness it must be acknowledged that Chinese women are not like ours, pure, intelligent, worthy of respect. While there are found the most charming exceptions both among old and young, any one who has, for example, preached to audiences of men and women, Christian or Heathen, must admit that the women are comparatively inattentive, unintelligent, and painfully earthly in their thoughts. Whether their minds are depressed by the somewhat low esteem in which they are held, in which they hold themselves, or narrowed by their partial seclusion, Chinese women are such that Chinese men are not altogether to blame for their want of respect for them.

On the other hand, the women often wield most powerful influence; indeed, it sometimes happens that the wife is the real head of the house. And when one hears of the annoyance and persecution that a Christian has to endure at the hands of his wife; or the blows that he meekly takes from his heathen mother; or, again, when one sees the multitude of women who become Christians with or without the con-

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sent of their heathen husbands; when one considers such things, one learns that it is easy to underrate the position of women in Chinese society.

Christianity is gently and almost imperceptibly introducing changes, and already the Christians, without at all ceasing to be Chinese, are exhibiting the equalizing effect of their new religion.

Where, among the Chinese, cruelty prevails, it is not in the treatment of wives or children, but in the management of slaves. Slavery, in China, is not, of course, that dreadful institution which used to prevail in Europe and America. In Formosa the typical sort of servitude is, I understand, of the following character. When a girl reaches, let us say, the age of ten, her poverty-stricken parents sell her as a household drudge to some wealthy person who keeps her till, perhaps, the age of twenty, and then finds a husband for her, whereupon she becomes free. In some instances she remains in bondage all her life. Occasionally slave girls have been punished with revolting

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atrocity, beaten black and blue all over the body, seared with hot irons, or even burned alive. If the master regards the servant with some favour, she is apt to be treated with severity by the mistress, as Hagar was in the days of old. Slaves are, however, but few in number, as only rich people can afford to keep them; and gross ill-treatment is rare. Public opinion is certainly against inhumanity to slaves; and in Formosa, under Chinese rule, magistrates have been known to thrust rich ladies into prison as a punishment for their barbarity.

Occasionally the selfish indifference of Heathen Chinese, and now and then even their brutality, horrify us; but our home newspapers are not free from such terrible tales. And, on the other hand, their kindness and hospitality to strangers make one quite ashamed of one's country.

Of Chinese politeness, regarded merely as politeness, it is not our present business to speak. Yet, even if not wholly sincere, it is often pleasant. "Teacher, come and eat," says the Heathen boy, sitting on the doorstep, and the

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very tramp at his wayside meal repeats the invitation. One visits a strange town. "Come in, and sit down," says one shopkeeper here, and another there. They have never seen the foreigner in their lives before, but if he stands to preach they will certainly bring him a chair, and probably a cup of tea. The blazing sun sinks towards the west. "Stay here for the night," they cry, "it grows dark; if you do not despise our poor little dwelling, stay with us overnight."

Such invitations may, or may not, be merely formal. But undoubtedly a great deal of courtesy is the expression of kind feeling. Where, in all the West, could one meet with the consideration that is shown in Chinese villages? The dogs bark; a little fellow drives them away with a stick. Soon a bench is brought; and very likely a woman goes off to kindle a fire, returning by and by with a teapot and cups of tea. Do you suppose that they wish to make money by their civility? No persuasion could induce them to accept a copper. Even if one asks them to boil some

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water, they do not expect any reward; and, though ever so much pressed, will usually decline it. It happens repeatedly that one is compelled to share their mid-day meal; they take one by the sleeves and drag one in to their hospitable board.

When it comes to showing the way, what eager friendliness is displayed! Once a boy of twelve, who had never seen a foreigner in his life before, volunteered to go with me to the next village, a mile away. The little fellow hurried indoors for a coat and a respectable pair of trousers, while his young brother shouted to him not to keep the stranger waiting. Then he trudged with me, most confidingly, along the lonely path. Would he take a penny for acting as guide? Not he. I have not space to multiply instances of men leaving their work to lead the way, or running and calling after me to make sure that I made no mistake in the directions; or coming out from their fireside, so to speak, on a pitch dark night, amid pouring rain, to guide me a quarter of a mile upon the journey.

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The most astonishing experience is to find after spending a night in an inn, that the proprietor, a Heathen, refuses to take anything for bed and board.

A missionary is crossing a stream, in order to reach a boat upon the sea. Some dozen men happen to be making the same attempt. Two, essaying to make the passage, are carried off their feet, and have to swim. "We'll join hands," say the rest, and carefully they put the foreigner in the middle. By and by some begin to lose their footing; they must stand; it is all they can do to stand, while they shout, "Save, save," and two or three naked sailors come to the rescue, without reward.

I speak of what may be the stranger's experience anywhere in the island of Formosa. Of course no one would assert that in all parts of China the people are always friendly to foreigners. But it is not only to foreigners that Chinese are kind. In some districts of Formosa there are free ferries, the cost defrayed by a wealthy proprietor. Elsewhere there is a great

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jar of tea placed by the roadside, often just at the top of a steep climb. Exhausted by the terrific heat, I have been glad to avail myself of this free refreshment. Again, after a bad harvest, well-to-do men sometimes make a free distribution of rice.

The poor cannot show their consideration for others in this expensive fashion; but they find other ways, such as the offering of seats, and cups of tea, and food and shelter for the night. One day, some years ago, I saw a Christian, while carrying a load, remove a piece of prickly bamboo from the path with his toes. I took this to be a mark of the influence of Jesus on a man's daily life. But often since then I have observed the same action performed by Heathen. It is a trifle; but it marks a thoughtfulness and care for others such as I did not look for.

Chinese hospitality to strangers almost passes belief. I observed some remarkable instances during a short stay in Singapore. A book-keeper from China, in search of employment, came to live with a shopkeeper, an acquaintance of his, and sitting waiting for work to

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come, lived on him, "sorned" on him, for many weeks. At last the shopkeeper failed, and his shop fell into the hands of another Chinese, a man of small means. He did not drive the bookkeeper away, but kept him for several weeks more, and, when he turned ill, paid a jinricksha to take him to the hospital, and even supplied him with pocket-money. Doubtless he soon began to wish to be rid of this mere stranger, and he had to borrow money to supply his needs; but he would not be so *rude* as to say, You must find lodging elsewhere. A tailor from China came to make a temporary home in the Christian church. He did not find the work to his mind, and, after a day at this job, and a day at that, settled down into idleness. Thus for perhaps two months he lived at the expense of the Christians, till they subscribed money to pay the cost of his voyage back to China. It is in this way that among the Chinese even ne'er-do-weels seldom come to beggary: the family clan is sure to support them.

I must next speak of the subject of Chastity.

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Is it true that without "love" a marriage is no marriage at all? Or is a love-marriage merely a Western or even Anglo-Saxon ideal? The New Testament does not contemplate love-marriage, but rather such marriage of arrangement as is found among Chinese, Japanese, and Hindus, and among the ancients, both Jews and Greeks. Such marriage is repulsive to us. It is a preventive of great evils, and a source, perhaps, of evils greater still. The Chinese have so fenced in their young women, that among them vice is rare. Even among young men the seclusion of girls and the practice of early marriage combine to make loose morality less prevalent than might be expected. But, as wedded life is not founded upon knowledge and love, unfaithfulness among married men and married women is, undoubtedly, immensely more common than it is in our own land. It must not be thought that the young men are pure, far from it. It is not easy to make any precise comparison, and the country differs much from the town. But, in general, it may safely be affirmed that the

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Heathen Chinese compare unfavourably with ourselves. As regards moral tone, the difference is far more striking; even when the Heathen are themselves pure, they have no fine ideals, no severe and lofty condemnation of unchastity. Of moral tone we shall speak by and by.

As regards Honesty, what shall we say? The Chinese turn out to be very different from what dogmatic prepossessions would lead us to expect. Indeed, upon the surface, they are not at all unlike ourselves. Everyone knows the reputation that the Chinese have for faithfulness to contract, a man's word as good as his bond; there is no need to enlarge upon that. Upon the whole, in spite of tales to the contrary, especially from Treaty ports, and in spite of exceptions that could be named, the honesty of Chinese servant-boys, whether Heathen or Christian, is very surprising to a Christian from the West.

As regards theft and robbery, how can we arrive at a just verdict? A few years ago one would have declared that Formosa was full of

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violence and spoil, the roads beset by armed highwaymen, houses and shops liable to violent assault by great bands of ruffians. To-day, Formosa might very well be thought to put Great Britain to the blush. Not long ago I was speaking to the Heathen of that mythical golden age when there was sunshine by day and rain by night, a measure of rice costing but thirty cash, or one penny; no need to shut the doors at dark, the folk so honest that none durst take to himself anything seen lying on the ground. "Such is the state of matters now," said an old dame, "we do not need to shut our doors at night." Formosa is indeed transformed. Is this the triumph of Christianity? It is the triumph of Japanese rule. The Japanese have made the people "moral by act of parliament." They have crushed and killed the robbers, until there has emerged a security of property such as history does not record.

In the matter of borrowing implements and not returning them until they are asked for, or of quietly appropriating articles, and using or

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abusing them until they are not worth asking for, the Chinese display a peculiar view of the rights of property.

In the manufacture of flimsy goods, and in the scamping of contract work, the Chinese probably outvie the most careless and unconscientious of British workmen.

When one comes to deal with honesty in speech, the difference between Formosa and our own land is very pronounced. It is more than pronounced; it is almost unmeasurable. Chinese lying has its limits; but upon the whole the people are neither careful of truth nor ashamed of falsehood.

One great source of Chinese falsity is politeness, the dread of giving offence, the desire to please and to avoid contention in words. As wonderful old Lao-tze said, "Sincere words are not fine; fine words are not sincere." To a Chinese it is extremely hard to say, No. If he is requested or ordered to do anything he cheerfully answers "Yes," and then quietly follows his own plan. When reproved, he takes the reproof meekly, and acts as before.



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If a favour be asked of him, *e.g.*, a loan of money, he will not be so rude as to answer, "I will not"; he says, "I cannot; I have no cash in hand." It must be granted, I suppose, that in truthfulness the Western races, at least the German races, have always surpassed the Orientals. Still, in this matter, no doubt, Christianity has made a great change in the West, as it is, most decidedly, making a great change in the East.

With regard to bad habits, apart from impurity and gambling, the Chinese at first sight compare very favourably with Europeans. They are, at least in South China, almost free from the vice of drunkenness, and thus the painful Saturday-night scenes of the West are quite unknown. Nor is one saddened at the spectacle of the little victims of intemperance, pinched and ill-clad children. As for opium, in Formosa the registered smokers number but one in twenty of the population, and while the victims of this habit rise late, work sluggishly and with troublesome irregularity, retire to rest when others are waking from

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sleep, and are apt to be careless of the cleansing of their dress and their persons, not to speak of the dishonesty that such an expensive habit sometimes entails; yet there is nothing very offensive in their manners. The misery wrought by opium-smoking is not to compare with the misery wrought by drunkenness.

Among the Chinese the habit of gambling is certainly more universal than it is among ourselves, and children are very much given to it. Gambling keeps the pawnshops busy, and sometimes leads to violent or even murderous brawls. Here again one may remark how much a government may do to mend the manners of a people; the severe repressive measures of the Japanese have accomplished a good deal.

In general, it cannot fairly be said that the Heathen Chinese of Formosa groan under the tyranny of vice or of man's inhumanity to man. In savage countries humanitarian motives may help to urge-on the preachers of the Gospel. Among the Chinese such incentives must take a very subordinate place;

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one seldom seems to find the elements of tragedy; one seldom feels that the Gospel speaks to broken hearts.

I have sometimes tried to persuade myself that Chinese Heathen are sad. The truth is, I think, that they somewhat resemble animals; they have little acquaintance either with such sorrow or such joy as we commonly experience. The children lead a free and joyous life; I am inclined to judge that Chinese youth is more cheerful and less burdened than British. On the other hand the Chinese, with all their eagerness for long life, do not enjoy a happy old age. Many of the aged look sorrowful, most are quite willing to confess that their life is sad. The bright morning is followed by a dull noon, and the shadows fall ere the sun goes down.

Of course it would sort with our prejudices to represent the Heathen Chinese as the slaves of every vice, without natural affection, unloving and unloved, oppressing and oppressed, their minds crushed with gloomy superstition, living in perpetual fear, no hope beyond

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the grave. It would be satisfactory to the Christian preacher to convince himself that the Gospel was as light shining in deepest darkness, a balm for intolerable sores, a comfort for unspeakable distress.

But these things are not so. I once asked an intelligent young Christian why it was that so few of his Christian fellow-countrymen greatly rejoiced in Jesus and in forgiveness of sins through His name. The answer was, "Perhaps it is because few of them have greatly sinned." Now we need not discuss whether the Chinese Christians in their former state were great sinners; certainly the Church contains a vast number of men who were vicious in their lives and of men who were gamblers, very many also who were opium-smokers, and not a few who once were great rogues. But neither then, nor now, have they felt themselves to be great sinners. The Gospel does not in any marked way "meet a felt want"; there is little or no "demand for it"; it has to "create a demand" for itself.

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It is just here, I think, that the chief difference between a Heathen and a Christian country is to be found. In the Home land, among all classes and kinds of people, good and bad, there are strong sentiments of right and wrong; every man is at all times a possible Christian; "feelings lie buried that grace can restore." Among Heathen Chinese, those who do wrong "not only do the same, but also consent with them that practise" such things. And such as live better lives have no great dislike for evil, or longing for good. One is at a loss to discover what motive to appeal to; even the baser motives of hope and fear lose their force with a people who live so much in the present. One is weary and oppressed and "away from home," because the people among whom one dwells have so little in common with oneself, no "divine discontent," no discernible longing for better things, *no thirst for the living God.* Ask them, man by man, whether they ever sorrow for anything. "Yes," is the prompt reply, "I mourn an empty stomach"; "I am sorry

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that I have no silver." And women, young and old, make answer in like manner. They do not mean to jeer or be discourteous; their avowal is quite an honest one. Inquire of the people whether they have sinned: "No," is the common response; yet, with a little skill, one can persuade them to admit that they have done wrong, and have sometimes regretted their misconduct. But they do not take the matter seriously; nor are they troubled about the sinfulness of sin. Vice is bad, because it weakens the body. Gambling is a waste of money. Opium-smoking wastes money too, and injures health. In the old days, when robbers abounded, the people had no very hard words for them. "What can a man do after a bad harvest?" they exclaimed, "What can he do but steal?" The Heathen are little incensed at wrong-doing, except when it affects themselves. Our righteous indignation, our hatred of meanness, our love of justice for its own sake, our love of law for its own sake, as when we make rules and vigorously enforce them;

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all such things are, I think, a mystery to the Chinese.

Thus the Heathen Chinese may be described as comparatively non-moral. In order to complete our discussion, it is almost necessary at this point to go on to show that he is comparatively non-religious too. The subject of Religion belongs to the next chapter; but it must here be stated that the Chinese have no sort of religious communion with their gods and goddesses; they know next to nothing about them, their history or virtues; they scarcely ever pray; when they do, it is not for spiritual blessings, for help to live aright, for remission of sins; they pray for a good harvest, profitable business, a successful journey, long life, good health, wealth, and a large and thriving family.

One may almost declare that they are without religion in our sense of the word.

Now, to the man who has ever entertained any kind of lofty and poetic thought, to him who has any love for nobleness, to him, especially, who has sorrowed for sin and

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yearned for holiness, who has experienced a "jubilant pining and longing for God," to that man, above all, who has known the sense of sins forgiven and of peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, to any such it is mere trifling to be told that the Heathen are very well as they are, happy and fairly well-behaved. He is no poet, no philosopher, no lover of human nature, who does not wish to see such happiness disturbed and transformed. He is no Christian who can bear to think of a joy in which God is not the chiefest joy, Christ the centre and the sum.

Zealous Christians, perusing this attempt to discuss a very difficult subject, may be disappointed that a stronger case has not been made out for the Christian as contrasted with the Heathen land. But it is desirable to avoid the extravagance into which missionary zeal is apt to betray us.

It is, of course, to be remembered that the essential comparison is not between a so-called Christian and a non-Christian country, but between regenerate and unregenerate persons.

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If only such a test could be applied, Christians, either at Home or abroad, would certainly have no cause to be ashamed. Nay, in a country like Formosa, where "of the rest no man dare join himself unto them," even the nominal Christianity offers such a contrast to Heathenism that Heathen Chinese are at all times ready to own it, alleging that Christians neither smoke opium, nor gamble, nor indulge in vice, nor utter foul language; but, abuse them as you may, they still return a civil answer, and behave themselves with meekness and good temper. It is a common saying that if all were Christians, there would be no place for the work of the magistrate. Japanese magistrates or police have been known to give voice to this sentiment, and to urge the Chinese Christian preachers to diligence, that the people may be won over to good behaviour.

Let it not be imagined, however, that we are putting forth the Chinese Christians as ideal, a pattern for the whole world. I am indeed continually amazed that Christians so

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ignorant, so unspiritual, should put off their evil habits as one puts off a suit of clothes. But now the most remarkable contrast of all remains to be mentioned, a contrast that in a later chapter I shall enlarge upon. Not only the Christian Scotchman, but even the unchristian, unconverted, Scotchman or Englishman is, in many moral and religious aspects, far ahead of the Christian Chinese. He has been brought up in a Christian atmosphere; he has assimilated Christian sentiments, not the half-formed sentiments of the Early Church or Middle Ages, but the developed Christian sentiments of our own time; so that he has a sense of right and wrong, a passion for justice, an admiration for heroism, an indignation against oppression, a dislike for falsehood, a contempt for crookedness and meanness, such as very few Christian Chinese have attained to. He has, at least up to a certain point, if one may say so without being misunderstood, a sense of sin and a sensibility to religious impressions, such as are scarcely found in the Chinese church-member;

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and, even although his will has not yielded, thoughts of sin and its punishment, thoughts of the love of Christ, of forgiveness, of holiness, will move him in a way in which a Christian Chinaman is not moved. Were you to converse with both of them on moral and religious subjects, you would feel that in some ways you had much more in common with the unregenerate Anglo-Saxon.

This is not simply a difference of temperament or of race. One needs to go abroad in order to learn what an inheritance we have received, not Christianity simply handed down from our fathers, but handed down from generation to generation in ever increasing wealth, like capital with accumulating interest, rather like an estate fostered and improved by careful stewardship. For the Good Steward of the manifold grace of God has from age to age been developing for us our great estate, taking of the things of Christ and showing them to His people, until now, all unawares to ourselves, and sometimes in spite of ourselves, we have acquired a sublimity of thought, a tender-

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ness of feeling, a depth in our nature of love and hate, a capacity for apprehending the preciousness of Christ, such as earlier generations of the Church knew nothing of, such as the present generation of the Chinese Church has yet to learn. From this point of view the difference between a Christian and a Heathen country is almost measureless. I must not at present expand this theme; but enough has been hinted to make home-staying British Christians bless God, that, according to the Chinese phrase, they have been born at the proper place and time.

### Note A

Since writing the above I have read Dill's "Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius." Upon the whole, my view of Chinese Heathen corresponds to his picture of Roman Heathen Society.

### Note B—Filial Piety

One subject I have left unnoticed, the question of Filial Piety. It seems scarcely fair to the Chinese to make no mention of it. But whether Chinese really excel in this matter is a question so much disputed by foreigners, and one on which I feel myself so incompetent to pronounce an opinion, that I content myself with remarking what a powerful *sentiment* we have to deal with. The love and

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care of parents for their young children, the alacrity with which filial sons or daughters will do or suffer anything to bring their parents ease or comfort, are subjects on which Chinese will warm to an eloquence that seems to us almost extravagant. Even uneducated men are quite familiar with some of the "Twenty-four Tales of Filial Piety," such as that of Gaw Beng, who went to bed early that the mosquitoes feeding on him might leave his parents unmolested, or of that other son who played the fool and drew a cart to keep the old folks amused.

One may find it difficult to appeal to a Chinaman's sense of sin; but a Heathen audience never fails to respond when one pictures a son or daughter lying awake thinking of a deceased parent, and recalling that disobedience and neglect which are now mourned, but mourned too late.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE RELIGION OF A HEATHEN PEOPLE

In speaking of Chinese religion, at least from our present point of view, it is of small service to give a theoretical account of the three sects, the Confucianists, the Taoists, and the Buddhists. Lao-tze, the founder of Taoism, was a sage whose teachings, accessible in the translations of Dr Legge, may well fill everyone with astonishment; but his words are seldom quoted by the Chinese, and are quite unknown to the mass of the people. If his doctrine, too good for this world, has had any influence, it is not direct, but through Mencius, who strikes one as a disciple of Confucius, softened and humanised and made democratic by the teachings of Lao-tze. As for the actual Taoism of our time it has an extremely slight connection with its so-called founder.

Of Buddhist teaching there is more trace in



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common life; but the central thought of the extinction of desire, and absorption into Nirvana, is wholly unknown except to a very few of the more intelligent among the people. Thus we cannot speak of corrupt Buddhism as if it were comparable to corrupt Christianity. We may regard the Roman Catholic religion as a very corrupt edition of Christianity; yet even there the central truth of the death of Christ for sinners is ever before the eyes of the people. Of Buddha, however, all ordinary Chinese, at least in Formosa, are entirely ignorant. They do not so much as know that he was an Indian philosopher. As for Kwan-im, the Goddess of Mercy, whom students of Buddhism, such as Sir M. Williams, regard as a female form, or counterpart, of Buddha, she is indeed adored by Chinese as well as Japanese; but the people frankly confess that her history has never been related to them, and those who seem to have some knowledge retail the wildest and most contradictory legends. What the Chinese have really got from Buddhism is some notion of Heaven (they commonly speak of the Western

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Heaven), and of Hell, or of "Eighteen Earth-prisons." The tortures of Hell are quite familiar to them, and terrible enough; though they do not seriously expect to have to endure them, and hope, at the worst, to make supplication to their judge. They believe that good conduct may procure them a speedier exit from Hell, and a pleasanter re-birth. If they take matters a little more seriously, they abstain from animal food on the first and fifteenth of the month. Some abstain for a life-time, and a few leave their homes to reside in those alluring retreats, the Vegetarian Halls, where they spend part of their time in reciting Buddhist sentences: the notion is that a vegetarian diet tends to purify the heart; but the Chinese proverb testifies that it is not always so. (Not a few have found their way through vegetarianism to Christ.) To refrain from meat is good for oneself; it means, also, the sparing of life. It is a pious thing to purchase live fish or animals in order to set them at large.

Such are, I think, the chief thoughts that have been derived from Buddhism.



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The case of Confucianism stands otherwise. All educated persons are able to quote Confucius as our fathers quoted Horace and as we quote the Bible; and many uneducated people who have never read his books are yet able to repeat his literary phrases, and partly to understand them. But it is not possible to decide how far Confucius moulds the character of the Chinese. He did not profess to be a creator, but only a transmitter, collecting and handing down the wisdom of the ancients. Perhaps, on the whole, we ought to regard the sayings of Confucius as we regard proverbs; they are the precise and well-turned expression of what is in all Chinese hearts. Chinese revere, and, in some measure, obey him, because he gives them no new commandment, but what they have heard from the beginning. It would obviously be absurd to imagine that the *sentiment* of reverence for parents, which fires the Chinaman's eloquence and brings the tear to his eye, and awes and shames the foreigner, is a mere product of Confucianism. That sentiment, so like a religion, was, of course, strong among

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the people of the Middle Kingdom long before Confucius saw the light; but he may have deepened and perpetuated what he found ready to his hand. In any case we can scarcely speak of Confucius as a religious teacher. He refused to converse about supernatural beings or about a future world. His tendency is rather to make the people feel that they have no need of religion, except the worship of ancestors.

And now what is the religion of the ordinary Chinese? Perhaps every grown man knows at least the names of the three famous sects; but in practice the people make no distinction. They bow down before Buddhist and Taoist idols indiscriminately, while they recite the teachings of Confucius, who scarcely taught of any divinity but God or Heaven, and did not worship idols at all. They worship obscure local deities, or make pilgrimages to distant shrines, paying attention to any and all who seem to promise effectual aid, and transferring their allegiance according to the end in view, as we go to different shops for different goods, or according to the rise and fall of the

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idol's celebrity, just as we forsake one shop for another which offers better value. It is not easy for Christians in Europe to apprehend the Heathen point of view. I do not mean to say that Chinese religion is injurious to morality. It is well known, indeed, that a robber, or a gambler, will sometimes offer part of his unholy spoil, if only the divinity will grant him success. Yet, on the whole, the Chinese believe that good conduct is well-pleasing to the gods and especially to Heaven. But then they never think of going to a temple in quest of any spiritual good. What they seek is health, wealth, long life, and the gift of children. Nor is it any concern of theirs to inquire into the history of any god or goddess. The one thing is to find out what deity, or rather what image, will grant their desires, and what offerings must be made, or promised, to merit the boon. The Chinese, of course, have almost no feeling of affection for those superior beings, nor do they greatly dread them; but when they receive the desires of their heart they have a natural feeling of gratitude and gladly pay their vows.

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Their visits to the temples are infrequent. They are anything but a priest-ridden people, and no one ever calls upon them to attend any kind of public worship. But if a man is opening a new shop, he wishes to secure the good-will of the gods, and if there is sickness in the home, he seeks to enlist their superior powers.

The birthday of the god or goddess always brings a host of pilgrims; yet there is no common worship, each departs when his business is done. All is free and easy. A foreigner may wander where he will, and examine or touch the most sacred objects without the slightest risk of giving offence. He may take his lunch at the altar if he pleases, or use the shrine as a preaching-place; in cold weather the people are quite ready to suggest the village temple as the cosiest and roomiest building.

The nearest approach to a public service is found in the performance of public plays opposite the temple. These, like the ancient classical dramas, are produced for the benefit of the deity; the inhabitants of the town or village

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subscribe to bring a theatrical company, who have crowds watching them in the early afternoon and all through the long night. When men or women visit a temple they do not bring any sort of sin-offering, or seek to offer beasts or blood as a means of atonement. They come to refresh the gods with the pleasant fragrance of their incense-sticks, to enrich them with the gift of money, that is paper-money, which must be burned in order to be available in the unseen spirit-world, and to offer them bowls of rice, fish, fowl, and flesh, and little cups of whisky, of which the worshippers partake after the divinities have had their fill. A candid idolater can scarcely conceal from himself the fact that the gods appear to leave his dishes untouched. But, of course, they partake of that subtler spiritual essence, the savour of the offerings.

If favours are to be received, the gods must be invited to name their terms. Two bits of bamboo root, shaped like the new moon, and convex on the one surface, flat on the other, are thrown on the ground. If they lie with

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the flat sides of both up-turned, or both turned down, the answer is unfavourable, and we are to understand that the recovery of our sick child will not be vouchsafed unless we make a more liberal donation. Higher and yet higher offers must be made, till at last the bamboo roots lie the one with its face up and the other with its face down. The god is content; our prayer is heard. When the harvest is past, and we have more ready-money, we shall pay our vows.

Visits to the temple are uncommon. As for prayers, these are also very few. I knew a young man of seventeen, who had prayed but once, when his younger brother was ill, and that was at the command of his parents. This case is, I believe, quite typical. And although, in their own homes, the people are perpetually reminded of higher powers, one can scarcely speak of fellowship with them. It must be understood that, in the guest-chamber of every home, on a high table against the inner wall opposite the great door, the most honourable place, there are kept the ancestral tablets, and

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sometimes a small image, six or eight inches high, of wood or clay, representing one of the numberless gods or goddesses; or instead of this a scroll is fastened to the wall just above this table, with representations of some principal deities, such as the Goddess of Mercy, or the Queen of Heaven (Ma-tsaw), the God of the Earth, and the God of the Kitchen. Worthy of mention is this God of the Kitchen, with a tablet and pencil in his hand. He notes the doings of the inmates and reports them to the higher authorities. Many Chinese burn incense, and perhaps light candles, upon this table or mantel-piece, twice a month, and on half a dozen yearly feast-days they offer dishes before sitting down to eat.

In times of trouble sorcerers must be sought out, and these, when the spirit has once possessed them, are able to prescribe the proper medicines, and to direct their clients how to appease some earth-spirit, or spirit of the road, that has been offended by the improper nailing of a peg, or thoughtless digging of a foundation. Straw men, or substitutes, as they call them,

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after being well fed, and rubbed against the patient's body, will often take his sickness to themselves. On certain occasions fortune-tellers must be consulted; they have skill to advise as to the proper means for mending a boy's bad luck.

When death comes sorcerers must be brought in. It is believed that the sorcerer has power to burst the gates of Hell, and open a way for the spirit to enter the Western Heavens. But indeed the Chinese notions of the future life are confused and contradictory, as if Chinese and Indian thoughts had mixed together. A man is supposed to have three souls, one in the grave (the most primitive notion?), one in the ancestral tablet, and one in the unseen world. The unseen world is named Region of Shade, or Earth-prison, and while it is recognised that the Earth-prison, or Hell, in its Buddhist form, is a place of torment, the Region of Shade, or Realm of Darkness, is often thought of, if thought of at all, as a not undesirable abode, like the unseen world of the Hebrews, a place where people buy and sell, and have need of

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clothes and slaves and money. It is a pious thing to get paper houses and furniture, paper clothes, money, and slaves, prepared, and burned for the use of departed parents. Many Chinese, however, have far less precise notions. Old women, if asked what will become of them after death, profess complete ignorance, or, with a laugh, declare that they will go flying away. There is no thought of re-union. Many a Heathen, as he lies on his bed, weeps at the prospect of approaching dissolution, and when he dies a practised ear might detect amid the sobs of his relatives such words as these, "Why did you leave us? Why did you leave us? A thousand years, ten thousand years, we'll never, never meet again."

Enough has been said to afford a general view of popular Chinese religion. It will be seen that, in our sense of the word, the people have no religion at all, or almost none. They have no communion with their gods, and, if ever they pray, it is for good harvests, prosperous trade, safety in travelling, health, wealth, long life, a numerous, strong, family. There is no

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confession of sin, and never a prayer for grace to live a life well-pleasing to the gods. I have heard, indeed, of a mother intreating the deity to deliver her son from the opium curse. I do not know whether this may be accounted a prayer for spiritual blessing.

Of course the Heathen are sincere; no one questions their sincerity. Some, it is true, influenced by the teaching of Confucius, have never had much faith in idols, and others have had their faith shaken by storms of disaster and bereavement. Yet their worship costs the people large sums of money, and in times of sickness they may be seen prostrating themselves in the temples in an agony of entreaty.

But for spiritual benefits they do not pray.

The one religious thought is that good behaviour is acceptable to the gods, especially to Heaven. In the dim background of the Chinese mind thoughts of a Higher Power are always present. The Christian missionary may remind them of such phrases as "Heaven produces; Earth nourishes;" "Heaven bestows peace and happiness;" "Men may plan but

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Heaven performs;" "Happiness and disaster are alike ordained by Heaven;" "Decreed by Heaven." The Heathen are ready to admit that in times of sore distress, as in a storm at sea, they do not call upon their gods, but upon Heaven and Earth to rescue them. And they are willing to laugh at their own inconsistency in attributing recovery from sickness to the virtue of some goddess, while death is ascribed to the fixed purpose of Heaven: as the proverb has it, "Gods cannot save the man whose life has reached its appointed term."

Heaven is a vague word that seems to have become commoner after the time of Confucius, earlier writers preferring the more concrete term *Siong-te*, "Supreme Ruler," or God. And educated Chinese sometimes explain the word Heaven to mean impersonal Reason. Nevertheless, we have the famous story of the man who was offered a bribe on the ground that no one would witness the transaction. "Heaven knows; you know; I know," was the answer.

Heaven, then, is a vaguely moral power, upholding right and avenging wrong. Chinese

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sometimes complain that Heaven refuses to nourish men. Or, as they put it in their rhyming proverbs:

"Fine hats bad men put on;
The good fall starving down."
"Do harm, do ill, ride as you will;
Be kind and fair, no clothes you'll wear."

But these complaints only serve to prove that, like the Israelites of old, Chinese expect justice from Heaven.

Such notions of a Higher Power prepare the way, though ever so slightly, for the introduction of the Christian religion.

As for the worship of idols, just because it is so[1] material, it is little associated with religious bigotry, and makes no fierce resistance to Christianity.

[1] One is reminded of what one reads of Greece and especially Rome. "Roman religion," says Dill, "was essentially practical. Prayer and vow were the means to obtain temporal blessings. The gods were expected, in return for worship, to be of use to the devotee." See Dill's "Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius," p. 542. *Cf.* Hegel's "Philosophy of Religion," vol. ii., pp. 306, 307, 312.

Concerning Greek popular religion, Wallace says, "Of that religion, at least of its inner life of faith, prayer, praise, we know indeed but little. . . . To the cultured classical writers . . .

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Those who denounce the wrong of depriving a Heathen nation of its religion and forcing ours upon it probably assume, without reflecting much upon the matter, that Chinese have an attachment to their worship *comparable to* the attachment of devout Christians to theirs. In truth the Heathen—and I am not thinking of Chinese merely, but of others also, especially Greeks and Romans—have thoughts about their divinities so different from Christian thoughts, that when they turn towards the true God their attitude towards Him is such as to surprise and disconcert the modern Christian of the West. No doubt the Chinese cling to their religious beliefs and customs, especially to ancestor worship, as men cling to what is familiar and venerable through age. But some of the Heathen superstitions are oppressive, as when a man dreads to repair his house, change

religion was evidently a matter which lay in the main outside their range of interests. And from several indications we are almost entitled to assume that . . . religion, strictly so called, was a defective and undeveloped element in Greece." See Prof. W. Wallace's "Lectures and Essays on Natural Theology and Ethics," pp. 196-7.

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the position of his bed, set up a cooking-stove, dig a hole in the floor, or even drive a peg into the wall, lest some earth-spirit should take umbrage and work him harm. Every sort of calamity and sickness rouses suspicion of offence given to some known or unknown demon. And if one would avoid mishap, events like house-flittings, marriages, and funerals must take place on lucky days, ascertained by consultation with those versed in such matters. Heathen envy the Christians their freedom from this bondage. Christians boast, and Heathen acknowledge, that the worshippers of Jesus have no need to be afraid of demons. "Do demons exist?" the Heathen sometimes enquire. "We do not deny that they exist," replies the Christian; "but just as the yamen-runner or police dare not molest you when the magistrate befriends you, so when Jesus is with us the demons dare not come near." One of my Christian acquaintances took and gained a wager that he would venture to visit a graveyard at midnight and leave his mark on a number of gravestones.

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What Chinese are most unwilling to let go is the worship of the ancestral tablets. It is not difficult to imagine the chagrin of the parent who finds that the son, who was to have fed and tended his spirit after death, has actually joined "the sect of Jesus." And one can understand something of the shame of the son, taunted as he is with unfilial conduct. Moreover, the people are often afraid that if, at the proper times and seasons, they neglect the tablets on the high table, the spirits of their ancestors will bring trouble upon them. Christians usually advise their Heathen friend to come to worship and leave the tablets in their place, assuring him that when he understands the truth, he himself will have no desire to keep them. This seems sound advice and it is commonly acted upon. By way of experiment, and with much trepidation, the Heathen begins to neglect the customary offerings. If the results seem unfavourable, and his faith in the new religion is small, he soon reverts to the traditional ways. If the results are favourable he by and by musters courage to throw the tablets under the

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bed-stead, and, as his faith becomes confirmed, he buries or destroys them.

As for the idols, we have already seen that they are not in any way endeared to the people; but they can usually cite instances to prove that prayers and offerings are efficacious. Only let them be convinced by argument or by experience that they have nothing to fear or to hope from that quarter, and before long they will hand the little images to their children as playthings, triumphing over them, and boasting of the new-found freedom.

But at this stage the difficulties of the Christian teacher are by no means at an end. For the raw worshipper, who has had the courage to cast away his idols, may perhaps be found to have carried many of his Heathen notions into his worship of the only true God. Of one thing we may be sure, whatever else of religious truth he has been able to receive, he expects that his God will be able and willing to bestow just those very blessings which the gods were supposed to shower upon their votaries. It remains to be seen



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whether he can enter into the wealth of Christian experience as we understand it, or whether the man who cared so little for his gods will easily learn to love and long for God as David did.

In the next chapter we shall investigate this matter; we shall see the sun obscurely penetrating the mists of Heathen thought and feeling, and shedding on the human heart its paled light and foiled but kindling glow.

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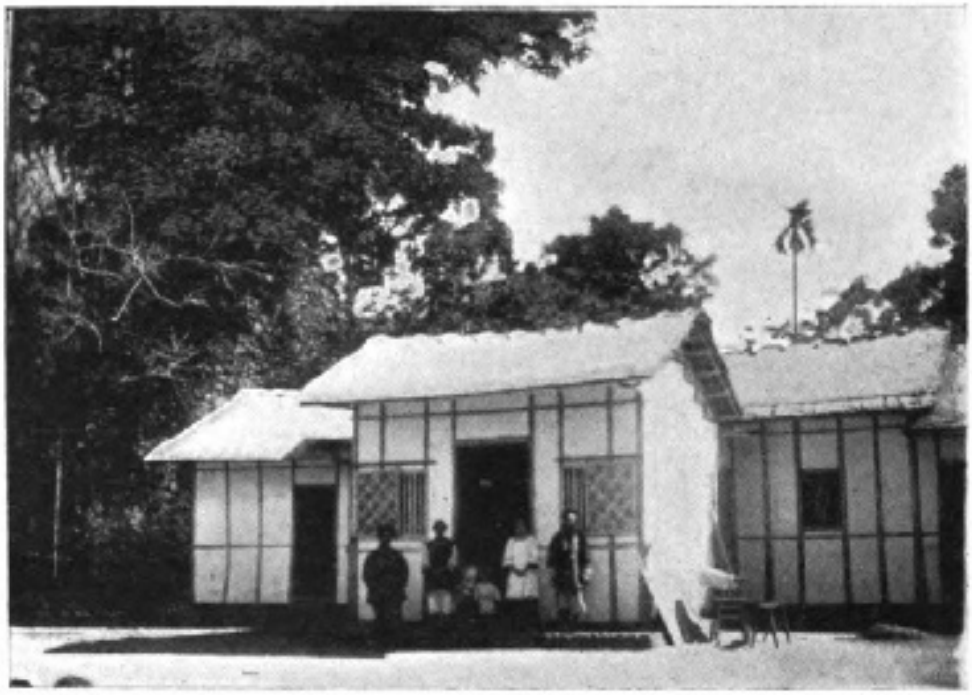

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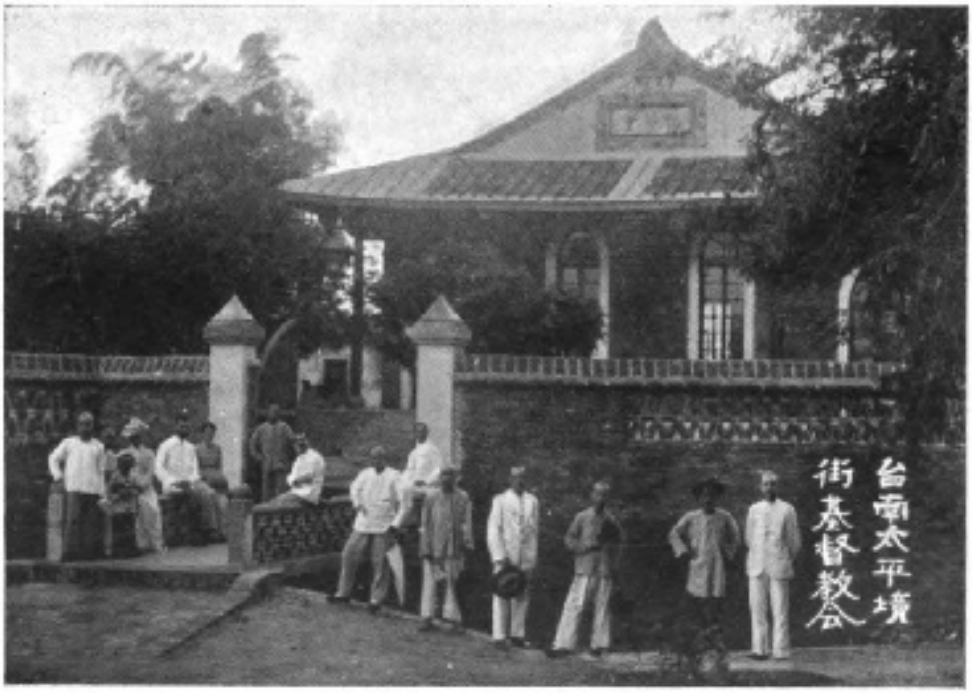


A TOWN CHURCH.

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# CHAPTER IV

## CHRIST CROSSING THE THRESHOLD OF THE HEATHEN HEART

WHEN the Gospel sounds on Chinese ears, it does not find them prepared. Every thought is strange and difficult. Some of the details of the story of Jesus may perhaps awaken a natural interest, yet the people are apt to move off long before the close, and if they listen to the account of the Crucifixion, it is not always with emotion, often rather with amusement, in general with a very languid attention, so that birth, death, and resurrection are soon alike forgotten. So little do the people know how to value the Gospel narrative that one is tempted to ask, Why offer them a merchandise for which there is no demand? "Why, indeed?" the Chinese Christians, the ordinary average Christians, will say, "they cannot understand about Jesus; we tell them



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about the folly of idolatry, and they understand that." Not only do the Heathen understand, they even enjoy the raillery of eloquent Christians, and often call for the recitation of a rhyme exposing to ridicule their favourite worship of ancestral tablets. Some also leave off the service of the idols without going further, and some diminish their offerings, so that in one town, a year or two after the church was established, the sale of idolatrous paper-money had fallen off by a half, and in another place the combined influences of Japanese rule and Christian preaching have already reduced the temple pilgrims to a third of their former numbers. One is reminded of the state of affairs in Asia Minor during the first century of Christianity. Indeed, at every turn and in more ways than we expect, we shall be reminded of the early Christian centuries. In those days Christians were "Atheists;" now we are constantly hearing that Christianity is a good thing, only there are two drawbacks—no worship of ancestors and no worship of spirits. The Heathen at all

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times seize most readily on the negative aspects of Christianity, as, again, the people of France have sometimes said to the Protestants, "We like to come to you for you have no religion."

But there are few Heathen so ignorant as to imagine that Christians are blank Atheists. It is not very hard to grasp the doctrine of a Supreme God, and although, for argument's sake, the people are apt to complain that God is unseen, they gradually become accustomed to the thought of the one Creator and Preserver of Mankind. Without more ado, and without trying to look deeper into the subject, some of them cast in their lot with the Christians. They are well assured that in their new worship they will enjoy a "peace" such as they have hitherto looked for in vain; that is to say, for we must not be misled by the sound of words, they are persuaded that they will find health and wealth and protection from demons in the Church of Christ. Higher motives are not lacking: they have a general persuasion that it is "a good thing to draw near to God": they find that Christians are

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a people free from vice and opium-smoking, strangers to gambling and foul speech; they wish to join themselves to such people, and perhaps long for deliverance from such sins: they have heard about Heaven too, and hope that Christian worship will bring them there.

Harnack, writing of the Ancient Church, says,[1] "One person would be brought over by means of the Old Testament, another by the exorcising of demons, a third by the purity of Christian life; others, again, by the monotheism of Christianity, or by the prospect which it held out of immortality, or by the profundity of its speculations, or by the social standing which it conferred"; and he adds, "a complete knowledge of Christian doctrine, which was still a plant of very tender growth in the second century, was certainly the attainment of a small minority . . . Even the knowledge of the Scriptures remained of necessity the privilege of an individual here and there, owing to their extensiveness and the difficulty of understanding them."

[1] "Expansion of Christianity," i. 105-6.

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Every part of this statement is true of Chinese Christians, except that they are won not by study of the Old Testament, but by the study of the New, which was not, of course, in the hands of early Christians. As regards "exorcism of demons," one of our flourishing congregations arose in this fashion. A Heathen brought his wife, who was insane, to a church where she was prayed for by a preacher and an elder. She recovered, and at once in her town, eight miles distant, there arose a congregation, which in those days often numbered 200, and after some natural falling off, is now rapidly growing.

What most attracts Heathen Chinese is, apparently, the Monotheism and the purity of life of the Church. But, as Harnack[1] says, the primitive Christians are no Deists; and one may venture to suppose that not a few of them, while failing to hold in their memories even an outline of the story of Jesus, and quite unable to explain its meaning, are, nevertheless, half-consciously attracted by what they have heard of Him.

[1] "Expansion of Christianity," i. 119.

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But now let me take a view of the Christians and their manner of regarding those truths, which they have, in part, received. No matter how much they may be warned against expecting to be freed from trouble when they become followers of Christ, they all bring with them the confidence that, whereas the gods have failed in giving the protection which they appeared to promise, God will certainly shield them from harm. Their hopes are soon disappointed; a pig dies, or a child; the heathen laugh; they feel discouraged, and, after a few weeks or months of church attendance, they relapse into Heathenism. In most cases, however, they hold on, their Christian friends assuring them that want of zeal, or of faith, or neglect of the Sabbath, was the cause of their misfortunes; and indeed they themselves are able to point to a crop of very fine potatoes, or a sudden recovery from sickness, or even to a fire that burned down their neighbours' houses and stopped short of theirs, as a manifest token of God's power and love. Yet their faith is not without its trials. "Your cattle died, but your

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neighbours' died too," the comforter suggests. "Yes," replies the sufferer, "but mine was the first beast to sicken; I cannot understand it at all."

In the case of many of the Christians, prosperity is valued not so much for its own sake as rather because it is an evidence of God's presence and protection, or even because it furnishes a proof of salvation and the forgiveness of sin. For, of course, the new converts, as they gather to worship in God's house, are constantly hearing from Chinese preachers, and from experienced Christians, about the doctrines of salvation; and they themselves are often, in their own untutored way, desiring to be saved; if it were not so, they all aver, they would never have taken the trouble "to come to worship."

At this point the question arises, How is a man to be saved? "By doing good," the uninstructed Christian answers. Or perhaps an old woman says, "I do not know much about history and doctrine, but in my own ignorant way I wish to follow Jesus." This latter reply

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may seem a specimen of simple religious zeal; but, as a rule, it means little. Christians who have got a hint as to the proper way of expressing the matter, can repeat the phrase, "Trusting in the Lord"; no missionary, however, unless he be very unsuspicious and incurious, can rest satisfied with this bare reply. As to the time of salvation, some think that they were saved when they first came to worship; others hope to be saved when they die; and there are always those who can explain that a man is saved when he believes: but if you were to enquire as to the time when they themselves received this grace, they would usually refer to the date upon which they became hearers of the word, or else they would fall back on the favourite phrase, "saved at the last day."

But now, wishing to approach the meaning of the word "salvation," we may ask our friends what proof they can give of their own. "I have more peace," is a very common reply; but it not seldom turns out that the meaning is, I have less sickness in the home, less disease

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among the cattle. Another says, "My heart is more at peace," meaning that he has got rid of the old fear of demons, and perhaps he has now some hopes of Heaven. Yet it would be unfair to the Chinese Christian to refuse to credit him with other thoughts, especially the thought of a heart at peace because it has learned to cast its cares on God. There are few, indeed, who know the peace that arises from a sense of sins forgiven, and only a very few who could tell of a peace that passeth understanding: but we must beware of the hasty conclusion that such people are not Christians at all.

What other proofs of salvation can be given? One says, Formerly I was a gambler, an opium-smoker, a man of vicious life and foul speech; all this is changed. Multitudes of Chinese Christians can offer such testimony concerning themselves; but it is scarcely necessary to remark that however delightful it is to hear such statements confirmed by outsiders everywhere, this external view of the matter is not wholly satisfactory. The very man who, on such grounds, is sure of

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his salvation to-day, may, on the same grounds, be quite cast down to-morrow, when he finds his passions over-mastering him. And, indeed, some candid Christian will lament that he himself has surely not obtained salvation, for he finds himself yielding to fits of anger.

Something more inward must be sought for. But Heathen have not been accustomed to look within; and the Christians have not yet acquired much skill in that art. Some one says, Formerly I had no fear when I plunged into sin; now I dare not, my heart is full of dread. When asked to unfold his meaning, he explains that he fears God. The idea of loving God seems scarcely to have occurred to him; yet it ought to be understood that the Chinese use of the term "love" differs from ours in two respects. With the Chinese "love" is love in action; and thus it is an unseemly boast to speak of loving another, whereas one may rightly say, "He greatly loved me," meaning, He treated me with kindness, and, perhaps, gave me presents. Moreover, "love," with the Chinese, is con-

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descending love. Parents "love" their children; children do not presume to "love" their parents; they "reverence" them. In general, the great may "love" the small; the small cannot "love" the great. Accordingly, when Chinese first hear us speak of loving God, the expression is apt to seem irreverent; our use of the term is novel. The thought of loving God does not spontaneously arise, though the feeling may be present. If, then, we desired to find what was in a man's heart, we might rather ask him whether he put God first, so that if he had to choose between God and pleasure, gain, friends, reputation, or, in a word, self, he would let everything go and cleave to God. But it is not easy to get converts to examine themselves, nor is it easy to persuade them to be perfectly truthful.

They crave external signs. Once, having conversed with a long established congregation for about five hours, hoping that the people might be able to relate something of their own experience I invited them to speak.

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One, a very worthy man, a worshipper for a dozen years, and an elder of the church, explained that he had received manifest tokens of forgiveness; some years ago a quantity of scalding rice-water had fallen on his son's leg without injuring the skin. Afterwards another Christian proved his salvation by some marvellous escape from the robbers. In another place a man who had been a zealous church-goer and a most liberal giver for sixteen years, rose to say, "Whoever may doubt of his salvation, I can have no doubt of mine. Sixteen years ago I had a dropsy for which neither native nor foreign drugs availed; I prayed to God and recovered; whoever may doubt of his salvation I have no doubt of mine."

Now those church-members did not share the view of the careless novice that salvation consists in deliverance from bodily trouble—Heathen with unconscious profanity tell the doctor that he has "come to save the world"—but they love such deliverances as tangible proofs of the soul's eternal welfare.

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If, baffled and disheartened, we turn back to the question, How is one to be saved? the usual answer is that a man cannot do good as the novice told us; one must trust in Christ for strength to live a good life, and in this way one may hope to be saved, or to have one's sins forgiven.

Here, at last, we have mention of Christ and of trust in Him. But if we begin to enquire about the work of Christ, we may be a good deal discouraged by the replies. In the first place it is to be observed that Chinese converts are remarkably little interested in the details of the life of Christ, just as, in a previous chapter we found them devoid of interest in the history of their Heathen divinities. It frequently happens that those who have been ready to suffer and willing to work on behalf of their religion are, nevertheless, ignorant of Gospel stories, and never, of their own accord, think of telling such things to the Heathen. And yet this will scarcely surprise those who have taken the trouble to wade through the writings of the early

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Christians. Harnack says,[1] "To 'imitate' or 'be like' Christ, did not occupy the place one would expect among the ethical counsels of the age." And again,[2] "It was only in rare cases that the image of Christ's person as a whole produced what may be termed a 'Christ-emotion,' which moved people to give articulate expression to their experiences. . . . In some of the dying confessions of the martyrs it emerges in a very touching fashion." So, also in some of the dying confessions of Chinese converts it emerges in touching fashion. "Jesus is coming with a white flag to take me to Heaven," the convert cries; "Do you not see Jesus coming?"

Of course it is common enough to hear ignorant Christians talk of "following Jesus," or "obeying the teaching of Jesus," or "trusting in Jesus"; but one finds, perhaps, that not an incident in the life of Jesus, nor a word of His teaching, can be recalled. "How," one naturally asks, "can you follow a Jesus of whom you know so little?" How can you

[1] Expansion of Christianity, i. 107. [2] *Ibid.*, i. 120.

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obey a teaching of which you have learned so little?"

Wishing to get nearer the heart of the subject, we enquire, "What did Christ come to do?" Some one rises to answer, "He came to teach us." "To teach us what?" "To teach us to worship God," is the prompt reply. Some other Christian is able to tell us that Christ came to save us. "How does He save us?" "By His almighty power." Or perhaps we can extort the answer, "He died for us," "He bore our sins"; but the meaning of these words, even the meaning of the word salvation, remains unexplained. Here again we may quote Harnack:[1] "The difference," he remarks, "in the answers to the question, How far and by what means Jesus procured salvation? was very great, and the majority never raised the question, being satisfied with recognising Jesus as the revealer of God's saving will, without reflecting on the fact that this saving will was revealed in the Old Testament."

[1] "History of Dogma," i. 200, note.



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One very apposite remark of Harnack's may be added.[1] "We have to observe," he says, "that the interchanging of God and Christ is not always an expression of the high dignity of Christ, but, on the contrary, frequently proves that the personal significance of Christ is misunderstood, and that He is regarded only as the dependent revealer of God." Even so Chinese Christians frequently talk of Christ rather than of God as forgiving sins, simply because "the personal significance of Christ is misunderstood." And, just as in the early Church, there is but little knowledge of the work of the Holy Spirit in convincing men of sin and revealing the things of Christ. Chinese will pray that a missionary may be filled with the Spirit so as to secure sufficient funds for church building, or filled with the Spirit so as to arrive safely at his journey's end. A worthy old Christian told me that he was at a loss to choose some parting gift, but that the Holy Spirit had directed him to give me a child's dress to show to friends in Europe. Such

[1] "History of Dogma," i. 188.

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conceptions remind one of the Old Testament, as when it speaks of Bezalel and of Samson. Of course they are true so far as they go; but obviously one cannot estimate Chinese piety by the frequency with which a Christian phrase occurs.

As the work of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is so imperfectly understood, there can be no clear view of justification by faith alone; the idea is as foreign to Chinese Christians as it was to Christians of the first three centuries. It is very difficult to get at the Chinese notion of forgiveness of sin, or rather no precise notion is discoverable. The tendency is to take it for granted that a man who observes the Sabbath and lives a blameless life will go to Heaven. So far as the ordinary Christian reflects on the subject, his thought probably is that by "grace infused" he is able to live aright, and may hope thus to have his sins forgiven, and be saved at the last day.

The truth is that if one wishes to understand the religious life of Chinese in Formosa, or, as it seems, in China, one must think not of

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Protestant Europe in the twentieth century, but of the Roman Empire in the Ante-Nicene era, as its Christian life is unconsciously presented by the Fathers, or in the well-known "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles."

No doubt there will be persons ready to exclaim that they have known many Chinese, and also many Japanese, whose religious life was very like our own. I also have known such Christians, men with whom one could enjoy a fellowship not wholly unlike the fellowship of English Christians. It would, indeed, be a strange thing if among all the native Christians there were none whose frequent intercourse with Europeans and close study of European literature made him something of a European himself in his thought and feeling. Indeed, one of the most evangelical of Chinese Christians that I know is a man who, constantly hearing the name of the evangelist Moody, persuaded a missionary to translate several of Moody's addresses for him, and thus acquired his present knowledge of the Gospel. And, of course,

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there are theological students, who, after five years, or more, of daily intercourse with missionaries, begin to share the thoughts of their teachers; although, on the other hand, I have heard some of them say that the meaning of Paul's epistles did not dawn upon them till their studies were almost completed. It is obvious that if one could transplant a Chinese boy to British soil, his religious sentiments would be those of the people among whom his lot was cast. There is nothing in the Chinese mind to make the ideas of Paul and Augustine and Calvin impossible for him.

Just so Paul's doctrine must surely have been partly comprehended by such companions as Timothy and Titus, and by a few of the converts in the cities which he visited. Yet it is manifest that the Galatians failed to understand it; and it is difficult to imagine the Romans following, or appreciating, the arguments addressed to them. Certain it is that when one turns to the earliest writings of the Gentile Christians, one looks in vain for anything like a reproduction of the deeper truths

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of the Gospel. Harnack says very truly that the only Gentile who understood Paul was Marcion, and he misunderstood him.

In studying the history of the Early Church, we wish not to select some glowing passage from the Epistle to Diognetus, but to view the Christian writings at their average, to note their fondness for disputing with the heathen the great question of the one true God as against the many false gods, to mark their merely formal references to the death of Christ, with little attempt at explanation or expansion, to observe how they regard the Gospel as a new and improved edition of the Mosaic law, and how, almost from the first, they conceive the Christian life as beginning in baptism, and as being maintained by legal observances of fasting and celibacy and good works, through which they hope to "merit" eternal life.

Now, if one examines the ordinary average Chinese Christian, so far at least as he is known to me, one finds in him almost exactly the same thoughts and tendencies. Like the Apologists he loves to rail at the idols and to

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exalt the Lord Most High. I have listened to a half-trained preacher discoursing on this theme for half an hour, and then dismissing the Heathen audience before they had been afforded an opportunity of listening to a single word about Jesus. The average Christian is still more fond of such preaching. And when the Heathen enquires how he is to be saved, he is told that the most important thing is to observe the Day of Worship, come to Church, ask a blessing at meals, keep the Commandments, follow the teaching of Jesus. The tendency to a doctrine of baptismal regeneration is held in check by the presence of missionaries, and there are multitudes of Christians who talk of baptism as a "mere ceremony"; yet a candidate will sometimes say, "I am getting old, and my friends tell me that I ought to be washed." And, again, just as the early Christians began to enquire how post-baptismal sins were to be atoned for, so the Chinese have asked how, when a man has once believed, the sins of after days can be blotted out.

As regards the Perseverance of the Saints,

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the average Christian, if he hears the matter discussed for the first time, will certainly hold that a man, once saved, may fall away and be lost.

I mention such things not by way of disparaging Chinese Christianity, but in order to explain it, and to show how it throws light on Early Church history and how Early Church history throws light on it. As one of the wisest and most impartial missionaries has often said, "Our Chinese [Protestant] Christians are nearly all Roman Catholics," that is to say, they have tendencies, which, if left to develop, would produce something not unlike Roman Catholicism. The Chinese Christians appear to be not a whit behind the early Christians. They are less intellectual and philosophical, no doubt, and, perhaps, less emotional; but in conduct they are probably superior.

The mingled meed of praise and blame that the Heathen bestow upon them reminds one very much of what one reads in the Ante-Nicene Fathers. There is, as already mentioned, the old charge of Atheism. And as in the early

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centuries the Christians were accused of slaying an infant, and of mingling its blood with the bread of the Communion; so even now it is often said that at death a Christian's eyes, heart, and breasts are removed to be converted into opium or medicine: at funerals one sometimes hears the Church people calling on the Heathen to come forward and ascertain from an examination of the corpse the groundlessness of such calumny. Nowadays, as of old, the Christians are taunted with being a pack of base, unlettered, foolish people.

Long ago the Heathen exclaimed at the mutual love of Christians. They do so to-day. At one place, where the whole population is Christian, the Heathen neighbours complained that it was a troublesome thing to steal potatoes or turnips from a churchgoer's field, for, no matter what Christian happened to witness the theft, he treated the loss as if it were his own. Indeed, when a man, and still more perhaps a woman, is fairly introduced and made at home in the circle where all are "brothers" and "sisters," it must be difficult to break off from

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Christianity. There is nothing like it among the Heathen, who scoff at the Christian phrase which ignores the distinctions of family and seniority. Not only are the members of each local assembly attached to one another in wholly novel fashion; they have the widest connections, like a great club with branch offices scattered all over the land, so that, wherever he goes, the Christian makes it his first business to search for the House of God, and there, of course, he finds hospitality, even if his visits, like those of the "prophets" in the early Church, are sometimes unduly prolonged. "What a wealth of intercourse there is between the churches! What public spirit! What brotherly care for one another!" These are the words of Harnack,[1] and they describe the Ancient Christians; but they are precisely applicable to the Modern Church in the Far East.

Well then, it may be argued, ought you not to be satisfied with the Chinese Church as it is, and will you not cease to trouble it with

[1] "Expansion of Christianity," i. 239.

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theological subtleties? All that East or West requires is a simple undogmatic faith in Jesus. The difficulty that you find in getting Chinese to understand such doctrines as Justification by Faith is a manifest proof that Church dogma is no essential part of the Gospel.

I grant that it is not easy to determine how far we are to press upon Heathens or upon Christians those truths which we more especially associate with the Reformation.[1] When a missionary spends a whole day with a congregation in talk upon such matters, and at the close hears one of the elders say, "This doctrine of salvation through faith alone is very profound," that is, incomprehensible; he almost questions the wisdom of trying any more to teach the people the doctrine of forgiveness received as a gift through repentance and faith. Nay more, when he finds that the story of Jesus is often a

[1] It is interesting to read David Hill's remarks on this subject. "Cramming too much food into a child is always an unhealthy process: so cramming all the great truths of Christianity into a Chinaman's mind all at once before he has had time to digest one, cannot forward his spiritual life. One truth thoroughly explained . . . is better than a cursory glance at all gospel truth." See "Life," p. 178.

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mere puzzle and stumbling-block to the Heathen, the evangelist could almost doubt whether it were not wiser to suppress this, and rather to preach what they understand, the doctrine of God, and the folly of idol-worship. To offer the Heathen full-blown Protestant Christianity seems like putting Virgil and Homer into the hands of a boy at the beginning of his classical studies. Why not confine the novice to the rudiments of Monotheism? I know a man who had been seeking the origin of all things. As soon as he heard about God he felt that his search was at an end, and at once he became a worshipper. And there is no doubt that a vast number of converts are gained by the simple preaching of God, with no mention, or but a bare mention, of Jesus.

But then there are always some hearts that are burdened with a sense of sin. For example, one old man even in his Heathen days used to weep for his sins: when he heard of Jesus the news was welcome and partially understood. For my part I could not keep silent about Jesus and the tidings of forgiveness through His

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name; and when I find that, whether they comprehend it or not, the people seem to be drawn by the Gospel, I am emboldened to believe that many feel what they but dimly discern. As for the notion that an undogmatic and simplified Christianity is to be the *goal* either of China or of Europe, such a view appears extremely unphilosophical and unscientific. Too much is sometimes made of Hellenic and Roman influences. Upon the whole, all minds are similar, and what is called Greek or Roman is essentially human. The History of Dogma has, upon the whole, been a history of the human mind, explaining to itself, and gradually coming to understand, the meaning of revelation. And if the Gospel had been first sown on Chinese soil its fruits would no doubt have borne a general resemblance to those that we have witnessed in Europe. It may be granted that theology has been unduly influenced by Greek speculation and by Roman legalism, and that we ought to reconsider our view of God and the Trinity, of the Atonement, of Justification and Sanctification. But

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that we are to sweep all such doctrines away, and return to the simplicity of the first centuries, is an idea that would surely never have occurred to one who had studied the writings of the early ages, or examined them in the light of Modern Missions. Strange that people of intelligence should mistake degeneration for evolution!

Nor, again, is there much force in the view that Christianity, if it is to be assimilated by Oriental thought, must rid itself of its Western setting and be moulded in a new and peculiar fashion.

But it is time to discuss an opposite view of the subject. Some who have taken the trouble to accompany us so far will no doubt have done so with disappointment and impatience, exclaiming, "Such persons as you describe are not to be counted Christians at all. Why do you not take the trouble to instruct them better?" To which I reply that if any feel disappointed, much more have we felt disappointed. But if you deny such people the name of Christian, you must likewise refuse

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that title to all the saints of all the early centuries. And, further, you must reckon that their purity of life, their zeal, their liberality (they are at least twice as liberal as British Christians are), their willingness to suffer and to die for the faith, have nothing to do with the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. "I understand," says the Heathen Chinese, "that when they take the bread and the wine their natures are changed, so that a bad-tempered man becomes a good-tempered one, so that an opium-smoker loses his love of opium, so that a gambler no longer wishes to gamble, and a vicious liver becomes a virtuous man." It may, indeed, be no easy matter to decide what persons are to be reckoned truly Christian, but, assuredly, the number is not to be limited to those who can give a reason for the hope that is in them. As for instruction, the ordained ministers and trained preachers receive Biblical and Theological education for four or five years, and when they leave the Divinity School they spend their lives in imparting their knowledge as best they may. But to expect that a course

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of instruction will make either ministers or congregations acquainted with the peculiar doctrines of Christianity is as if one were to expect that a course of instruction would make a European acquainted with the peculiar features of individual Chinese.

When an Englishman goes to the Far East he is quite unable to distinguish faces; he declares that the people are all as like one another as peas. By and by he learns that Chinese differ from one another no less, perhaps, than do men and women of the West. And yet, even with much practice, the stranger will scarcely acquire the skill of the Chinaman born.

In like manner the Chinese, as also the Hindus and Africans, find it very difficult to distinguish Europeans; they constantly take one missionary for another, and when they find two of us together they declare that we certainly belong to the same family. The brown hair, the pale complexion, the prominent nose, the peculiarly shaped eye, absorb attention; so that the individual features remain

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unnoticed. It is quite evident that even our intimate friends among the Chinese have not our eye for the characteristic lines and marks.

Thus also, in the face of God, when the Heathen first beholds Him, only the more general features are discernible. As he contrasts the Eastern with the Western, so also he contrasts the foolish idols of wood and clay with the great God. He may be dimly aware of something more; but it makes no proper impression upon him. It is long ere he begins to discover the redeeming love of God in the face of Christ Jesus. Not of the most advanced can one fairly say that their sense of sin, or their joy in forgiveness, or their feeling of close personal union with Jesus, can rightly compare with that to which we are accustomed in the West. The least saint in England or in Scotland is greater than the greatest in Formosa because there lie behind us the Dark and Middle Ages, the times of the Reformers, the days of Wesley and Whitefield and Chalmers; and the best is yet to be.



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One needs to go abroad in order to discover how far we have travelled in the course of nineteen Christian centuries, and how we are, in a very peculiar sense, the heirs of grace. Any careful student of Church History, or of such a book as Dr Rainy's "Delivery and Development of Christian Doctrine," knows very well that all the early ages of the Church failed to grasp what seem to us to be essential truths. But in order to feel how much there is in what we call "The simple Gospel," and how difficult, I should almost say impossible, it is for unprepared minds to appropriate its wealth as "simple Christians" do; one must watch, often with unspeakable pain, but not without profit, the Heathen as he begins to welcome, and strives to assimilate, this new and strange and most profound religion.

Let us bless God that we were born on Christian soil.

NOTE.

Dr Forrest, in discussing "The New Life in Christ," and in considering how the simple faith of Abraham gave

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way to the legal and pharisaic religion of the later Jew, makes some very suggestive remarks which will surely throw light upon the subject if any reader is troubled by the above sketch of Chinese Christianity. See his "The Christ of History and of Experience," pp. 256-261.

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# CHAPTER V

## SOME CHINESE CHRISTIANS: THE STORY OF BROWN-HORSE WOOD

My aim in this and the next chapter is to describe the Christians of Formosa, both the ordinary and the extraordinary ones. Usually the first sign of grace in a Heathen is his desire to purchase a hymn-book in Chinese character. He is probably unable to read, but he can make out a few of the symbols, and he gets one of the Christians, or the preacher, to recite a verse in his hearing, which he then repeats after him, pointing the while to the character which stands for the syllable enunciated. When he has it by heart, he is able to teach himself, and now he is ready for a second verse. In the examination of an ignorant old candidate for baptism, a test that may be applied is, How many hymns does he know? If he or she can read only three or four, one may take this as a sign of religious indifference.



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A more notable mark of interest is the purchase and mastery of the alphabet sheet; it begins "b, ch, chh," and the vowels are learned separately. The Chinese Heathen think that our letters are like sprouting seeds, very odd and difficult; but if they set themselves to the task they can sometimes name all the sounds in an hour or two; some are beginning to read the Romanized version (Chinese words with Western spelling) of the hymn-book in a fortnight, while some, after years, are still "learning." A few, failing to master the alphabet, are able to learn simply by reading the words,—quite the approved modern method.

"Reading maketh a full man": not always; some, who have read all the gospels, cannot, when questioned and prompted, recall a single miracle or parable. Others, unable to read, but listening attentively, relate a good deal in a very lively and apocryphal fashion. Neither Heathen nor Christians have any strict regard for truth. One is sometimes startled to find converts putting into one's mouth remarks that one has never made; and I have often listened

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to Christians edifying a street audience with the rehearsal of a conversation which, as they affirmed, they had held with me when I stood preaching to them in their old Heathen days; it was an imaginary conversation. And so, perhaps, when one is testing a man's knowledge of Scripture, one is assured, as if it were a sober fact, that the fruit stuck in Adam's throat; and, at least in the presence of the gullible Heathen, a zealous disciple will point to the shape of a man's neck as a manifest proof of the Scripture narrative; he does not hesitate to add that, after he had deceived the woman, the serpent's feet dropped off. The Heathen are boldly invited to enquire of the pious collectors of human bones whether it is not the case that males are found short of one rib. The favourite parable of the opium-smoking prodigal son is related with great gusto and dramatic skill. You see him go out in a sedan-chair and return in rags. The father does not, of course, kiss him—it would not be Chinese to kiss even a little strayed child brought home to his mother—nor do they kill

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a fatted calf; but in his own Chinese way he shows his satisfaction. A moderate satisfaction: one Chinese boy, indeed, when he heard of the father's welcome, made the frank and unkindly comment, "a great fool, he!"

The story of the widow of Nain is also recalled by many Chinese Christians; evidently Jairus's daughter is of less account. Jesus sees the men about to carry the coffin, and bids them wait a little, for He will bring the son to life. "How can you do that?" asks the mother. "I will pray God," says Jesus. He then recites some words, and calls the young man to arise.

Blind Bartimaeus, with his beggar's wallet, at the city gate, has his eyes anointed with clay.

He is an ignorant Christian who cannot at least reproduce the parable of the sower. But, as a rule, it is difficult to get the people to take an interest in the story of our Lord; and sometimes those who have worshipped for many years are still wholly ignorant of any gospel story. The habit of listening to a long dis-

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course is quite a new one to most of the congregation; and raw Christians often study the hymn-book or the alphabet while the sermon is going on.

Almost all Christians can pray in public quite as well as in private. For a Heathen there is no such thing as private religion; for a convert also there is little or no private religion. When two Christians sleep together they kneel on the bamboo bed—the mud floor is not fit for kneeling on—and one of them prays aloud: one prayer expresses all the desires of both. Next morning, just before they rise, they kneel as before, and one prays aloud. If a Christian be alone he prays audibly, and expresses the same thoughts in similar words, not perhaps thinking it necessary even to change from the plural to the singular pronoun.

Prayer always begins with thanksgiving, and often with a long phrase about the great God who made heaven and earth and sea, providing the "five grains" and all the vegetables for the use of man. There is also mention of the gift of Jesus Christ and

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of His death for our salvation. In most prayers there is a clause or two about "our heavy sins," but there is little confession of sin in detail, or thanksgiving for the remission of sin. There are sometimes petitions for the church and its office-bearers, and, of course, for friends, especially those who are sick.[1]

It is not to be supposed that such Christians will be ashamed of their religion, any more than Heathen are ashamed of theirs. All Christians are ready to expatiate on the folly of idol worship, but some are more zealous and successful than others. It often happens that men or women who scarcely preach "the Gospel" at all are, nevertheless, most effective "evangelists."

All Chinese converts agree that the greatest hindrance to the spread of Christianity is found in the conduct of Christians, and usually they specify the fault of dishonesty in buying and selling.

[1] "Earnest supplication, profound adoration, mighty intercession are not so much the mark of the Chinaman's prayer as minute information." So says David Hill. See his "Life," p. 172.

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When the office-bearers consider a person unfit for baptism they do so on the following grounds: he is dishonest; or he has a bad temper and uses foul language; or he is apt to quarrel with his wife; or she, again, if her case comes under discussion, is disobedient to her mother-in-law and very proud. Of young girls it is sometimes thought difficult to judge, and perhaps it is suggested that it is better to wait till they are married. Now and then it is objected that the candidate, though head of the house, has still got the ancestral tablets on the high table or mantel-piece, or it is hinted (for Chinese Christians incline to doctrines of compulsory Christianity) that he is inadmissible because he permits the younger members of the family to worship the tablets. Many of the converts have been vicious, but vice is seldom spoken of as a bar to baptism, since church-goers are almost always those who have abandoned the paths of wickedness. Nor is gambling talked of; Chinese are great gamblers, but among some 600 Chinese communicants I do not remember one who had

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ever to be reproved or suspended for this fault. There is no need even to discuss the subject of opium-smoking; the Chinese minister and elders will not entertain the thought of admitting a man who smokes, were it but a very small amount, and they are surprised and amused at the Western idea that "moderate" opium-smoking can be compared with moderate drinking. There are reformed opium-smokers, I suppose, connected with every congregation. One of the churches, with a communicant membership of seventy, has about twenty reformed opium-smokers associated with it. Yet among the 600 communicants above mentioned, I know of but one who has fallen back into the bondage of this habit.

People misunderstand the case if they suppose us disappointed with the character of the converts. What we are disappointed with—yet a study of church history might have prepared us for this disappointment—and what makes an examination of candidates for baptism a most depressing task, is the spiritual ignorance of the average Christian, and one marvels

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ever the more that those who know so little exhibit so great a change in their lives, as if there dwelt in them, in many of them, a power which they themselves failed to comprehend.

I am not speaking of the Aboriginal Christians. They have come over to Christianity not one by one, as Chinese do, but village by village, and they exhibit a lamentable indifference and ignorance, associated with much lapsing into vice and opium-smoking. Yet even for them, as all confess, Christianity has accomplished not a little.

Indeed, of all Christians in South Formosa the most worthy and notable, as it was commonly thought, was an Aboriginal whose name was Bright Pearl. A tall man he was and swarthy; one might call him ox-eyed, but his gentle glance was full of intelligence and brightness. His voice was soft but strong; he had a lordly stride and a most courtly bow. He knew all the rules of ceremony; and I may say that the two men from whom I have heard most of matters of decorum were Aborigines; they seemed to outvie their teachers, the Chinese.

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When Bright Pearl rose and bowed from the waist, and then turned at the door to bow again, I think that he wished to wind up his lessons in Chinese with a lesson in etiquette. I remember how one day he told me that *even* Chinese preachers were apt to be negligent of pulpit manners, saying to the congregation, "Come, sing the 27th hymn," whereas they ought to have said, "Brothers and sisters, please come all and sing the 27th hymn." His expression, "*even* Chinese," meant, "If Chinese are rude, missionaries are much worse;" but he was too polite to say so. One day, when I asked him for the pronunciation of some word, he opened his mouth a little to let me see how the sound was produced, but apologized for the impropriety. At that time he was teaching in the High School. One of his scholars, no saint himself, tells how the delicate Bright Pearl used to rise in the night to pray, and how his influence was felt by all the scholars, even by bad boys like himself. Bright Pearl had been carefully schooled from childhood, and had received a college

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training. His gifts and graces marked him for the first ordained minister of Formosa. An admirable minister he became and a model clerk of Presbytery, with accurate knowledge and keen delight in all the rules and methods of procedure. But the sky soon darkened; his career was a short one; he died of consumption.

A wholly different sort of man is the Rev. Brown-Horse Wood, the first Christian minister of Chang-wha. He comes and goes like an angel. The door opens, and in a moment he has found the nearest seat upon his left hand; it is the lowliest place. In a soft, modest, diffident way he utters what is on his mind, and then with a swift bow he is gone. If one has something to add one must follow him instantly, for he does not move in the deliberate Chinese manner, but with rapid steps like a European. He is always thin and gaunt, but wiry and strong and never weary. This man has an insatiable appetite for talk on spiritual things; he is always a welcome visitor, and one often wishes his stay prolonged. He has had a

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Rev. B.-H. Wood. Mr Yellow.

AT THE ORDINATION OF REV. BROWN-HORSE WOOD.

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remarkable history, and one of his friends has suggested that his experiences may have affected his brain, and may, perhaps, account for his abrupt and slightly eccentric manner. His father, long dead, had been a graduate, with his home in the city of Ka-gi. His elder brother was likewise a graduate, and used to teach a school in the village of Ta-nyao, or Beat-the-cat, four miles from the city. One of his scholars was young Brown-Horse Wood. One day he left the school for his mother's home. In the afternoon, hiding a gambling instrument in his wide sleeve, he sought out an old friend of his, and invited him to play a game. "I will not play," said his friend. "Why not?" "I have got something better; I have joined the Jesus Church." He showed him his hymn-book, "God created the heaven and the earth." He had learned in his Chinese books about God, but never of creation. He read on in the chanting Chinese style, and then said, "I'll come to worship with you." "Very well," said his friend, "this is Friday; two days more and it will be Sunday." On Sunday he

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was breaking up sticks for his mother's fire, when he remembered that it was the hour of worship, and off he ran to the obscure little church. At the close of the service the preacher spoke to him, explaining the way of God more perfectly; and during the next few days our young friend was constantly about the place. Before the week was out he told his mother that he could not show his respect for the gods as she wished him to do, for he was now resolved to worship God alone. His mother wept and tore her hair, and his brother's wife tore hers. They sent for his brother, and he, in his white stockings, without waiting to put on his shoes, came running home, seized Brown-Horse by the queue, and, twisting it, dragged him about, while, with blows, he reproached him for bringing such disgrace on a literary family. "We are not base people," he cried, "that we need depend on a foreigner's influence with the magistrate"—literary men are respectfully treated by the judges—"and as for lucrative employment, you'll not get that from the Christians; I will provide you with all that

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you need." Brown-Horse, in true Chinese fashion, looked up to his elder brother as a father and a teacher, and did not at all struggle with him. By and by they both went away back to the country school; still the elder brother abused the younger, striking him with his long tobacco pipe, or dashing cups of tea in his face. When all was of no avail, he threw a rope over the rafter, and prepared to hang himself. "You have disgraced the family," he said, "and I no longer care to live." The Chinese, I may remark, are rather fond of committing suicide for the express purpose of drawing trouble on a surviving relative, who will be accused of having brought about the death. When Brown-Horse saw his brother at the point of death he prayed that, if his "time" had indeed come, God would take so many years off the allotted period of his own life, and put them on to his brother's life. This strange prayer was heard; his brother did not die, but still continued to abuse the young Christian, particularly at the New Year time which was just coming round. At that season he should



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have bowed before the ancestral tablets; his brother thrust the incense-sticks into his hands, but could not compel him to do obeisance. It was about this date, I think, that the teacher threatened to kill the young convert, whereupon Brown-Horse told him that he might do as he pleased, and, bending his neck to receive the death-blow, he committed his soul to God. The threat was not executed. Meantime he began to consider that he was debarred from worship in Ka-gi; accordingly he resolved to have a little service of his own, singing a hymn as best he could. What sort of tune he sang I do not know, for he had been but a single Sunday at worship. His elder brother looked on him as mad, and finally chained him in a room, giving him nothing to eat for the space of three or four days. Every other plan failing, this heathen teacher set out for Ka-gi: feigning himself a stranger, he told the preacher the tale of the two brothers, and concluded by offering money for a supply of medicine to cure the malady of the younger. Thereupon the preacher so expounded the truth that

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the elder brother went home to unbind the younger, knelt asking Heaven to forgive him, and even promised to become a worshipper.

This was too much for his wife, who so wrought upon him that he returned to his persecuting ways: in the end, finding Brown-Horse incorrigible, they drove him from the house.

In those days, as I have heard him say, he would have been well content with the meanest occupation, were it but a cow-herd's work. He began to teach a Christian school, receiving four shillings a month for the first year, a little more the second, and a little less the third year. When I mention that missionaries' servants were then receiving ten or twelve shillings, and Christian preachers twelve to twenty shillings a month, it will be seen how small his earnings were.

Afterwards he went to the college in Tainan, where he studied for about four years. Next he became a preacher, settled in one charge for the space of perhaps two or three years, then moved to two or three other congregations

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to be with them for longer or shorter periods. When I first saw him he was stationed in the Pescadore Islands; I was much struck with his appearance and conversation. This is he who is now that single-hearted, spiritually minded, most gentle, and lovable man, the Chinese minister of Chang-wha. It must not be imagined that he had any great knowledge of Christ when he was ready to die for his faith. Indeed it was not till he had left college that he began to understand the doctrine of an immediate forgiveness of sins, and it was only when, through an interpreter, he was made acquainted with the writings of D. L. Moody, that he became possessed by the great thoughts of the Reformation.

He never was any great student; and yet in his grasp of Christian truth he far surpasses younger and more learned men. He is much given to musing as he squats on his bed in the morning, or sits on his haunches, fanning the charcoal flame till the water boils, and a cup of tea, his favourite beverage, is ready. But, while his mind is full of fresh and ingenious

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illustrations he cannot be called a great preacher. He speaks so rapidly that Heathen and Christians alike have difficulty in following him. Like most Chinese, he has no idea of oratory; his preaching is not "dignified conversation," it is undignified conversation. Yet no one can better convey in simple and striking fashion the meaning of religious truths. He is fond of the method of the prophets, visible illustration. One would be apt to suppose that such methods were childish; but what seems ludicrous to us is, to many a simple old woman, an unveiling of darkest mysteries. He tells out some Chinese cash, each with a square hole in its centre; the Christians are to perceive that originally we are all like these cash, scattered and liable to be lost. Then he takes a cord and strings the cash on to it, tying the ends together and jingling the bunch triumphantly: this cash-string is Christ Jesus; no fear, now, of straying. Again he stuffs the hole of the cash with a chip of wood, and vainly seeks to pass the twine through; he wets and twists it and still fails; like this cash are souls filled with their lusts,

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and giving no entrance to the grace of Jesus. Or he wishes to show how the various blessings of the Gospel, such as Forgiveness and Sanctification, are linked together, and he carries into the church a string of little rice puddings, dangling them before the audience, with the assurance that all can be bought for a halfpenny.

His favourite illustration is one employed in preaching to the Heathen: with a broken tile he scratches a circle on the ground to represent Hell and another to represent the World, in the centre of which he draws a smaller circle to stand for Palestine, surrounded by other small circles to symbolize Rome, Germany, Great Britain, China, Japan, and Formosa. Now he picks up a piece of bamboo, breaking it into tiny morsels and laying them on a bench. The bench is Heaven, and the little sticks are the souls of men. One by one they are dropped down on the different circles; thus are men born in different lands. If they worship God and live aright they return to Heaven; and, suiting the action to the word, he lifts them one

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by one to the bench. If they worship idols, and do wickedly, they go to Hell; and, as he speaks, he throws them into that large circle already drawn. But now, why should God be like the owner of a fish-pond who puts small fry in only to have them carried away by a flood? So a hymn-book, lying on the bench, will stand for Jesus; the book is dropped down upon the circle called Palestine, and then speaking rapidly till he foams at the mouth, our excellent friend rushes through the story of Jesus—birth, life, death, and resurrection—till one sees the book go flying up to the bench once more. Afterwards he explains how, if a man trusts in Jesus, when he is dying the Saviour will come to receive him; and, as the preacher talks, he brings the book down, lays the little stick upon it, and both go up to the bench again.

All this may seem puerile; but it is exactly the sort of preaching that suits the ignorant, and when they have listened the people say, "That is clearer now; we understand this better." For the Heathen one cannot preach

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too simply, and when one fancies oneself to be speaking very plainly to the Christians, one is painfully aware that a considerable part of the congregation are "like ducklings listening to thunder." Some Chinese illustrations are grotesque and almost coarse. To explain the need for sanctification the preacher tells how a child falling into a cesspool, and then running home and jumping up on the family bed, would be told that such a place was not for him in his present condition.

Like other Chinese preachers, Mr Brown-Horse Wood is fond of dividing his subject into a number of very simple and obvious heads, such as I. What is the meaning of Salvation? II. By what method do we obtain Salvation? III. At what time? IV. What is the *use* of Salvation?

Mr Brown-Horse Wood is very fond of company, as most Chinese are, and does not care to go off on an expedition by himself; but he grudges no trouble, and is always ready to help in any enterprise. How he delights to converse on spiritual things, as we tread the

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narrow track in single file! His questions sometimes come so thick and fast that, like "jesting Pilate," he waits not for the answer. How thoughtfully kind he is, watching over one with a sort of motherly care, and telling the Christians in a quiet aside what things to cook for a Scotchman's taste! One feels ashamed of his kindness. And then with what geniality he talks with the assembled Christians, reconciling, exhorting, suggesting. How he can plead for money, and persuade a congregation to do what they had pronounced impossible! He knows well how to adjust the affairs of the church, and can fly from one place to another in the course of a Sunday, making nothing of a twenty miles' walk. In many respects he is very like one of ourselves; but when he dispenses the bread and the wine, one sees that after all he is the prosaic, one might say irreverent, Chinaman, and, though tears are shed, especially by some who think it proper to weep,[1] nothing could make us fancy that we

[1] It seems to be the Roman Catholic idea of weeping, not for sin and grace, but for the suffering Christ.

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were present at a Scotch communion. The minister blurts out a matter-of-fact little speech; the elder is asking in a loud voice whether all have been served; one of the women is complaining that she has been left out, and another is reproved by an office-bearer for feeding her child with a bit of the bread, as if she believed that the sacrament had some magic virtue. The Heathen are standing round to get a view of what is going on, and to catch a glimpse of the women; they are driven back a little; and a man outside, with two loads hanging from his shoulders, shouts to his comrades to come on again, ere darkness falls.

After supper, the Christians of the neighbourhood, some with lanterns in hand, come flocking in again. One longs for rest; but Mr Brown-Horse Wood is not tired; with great gusto he gives them another discourse, and then, one after another, the brethren rise to give thanks and pray, till the weary foreigner wishes that it were proper to sit down. Early next morning we are invited to breakfast in one of the Christians' houses. It is quite a sudden

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summons; but, like a royal invitation, it can scarcely be declined. When all things are ready, the host, or his son, comes again to hasten our movements. The preacher of the church declines, urging that his own breakfast is almost cooked; our host drags him by the sleeve, and after a show of resistance he joins our company. As we pass beyond our threshold each gives way to another; finally the young push the old and honourable out, and the order of precedence is forcibly settled. In single file we wend our way to our host's abode. Perhaps he pours out some hot water into a brass or wooden basin, and, throwing a piece of cloth into the water, invites us to wipe our hands and faces with it. Most of us, however, went through this process before we left the house in which we slept. After all it turns out that the dishes are not yet on the table. By-and-by cups of tea are brought, and thereafter we are invited to seat ourselves at the banquet. Each strives to take the lowest place, which is next the door; after a tussle some of us adopt the temporary compromise of a low seat

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on the left or honourable side; the most honoured guest, is, however, violently dragged to the chief seat, and now we are ready to begin. I need not go through the details of the breakfast; but at the close we are invited to wipe our hands and faces with a cloth dipped in warm water, and to rinse out our mouths with a little tepid water in a bowl. Thereafter we rise to depart, bowing and thanking the host as we go.

Then with gong and bugle we are off to the villages; some of the Christians give up their work for the day and accompany us. A few of them can speak; others listen and learn; most of them are well known in the villages, and their presence helps to advertise and commend the gospel. Everywhere the people bring benches and cups of tea; at the hour of noon they wish us to share their meal; but we have no time for that; we have brought scones, and, while some eat, others discourse to the men just returned from the fields. The men stand on the one side, the women on the other, the children, with smaller ones strapped to their

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backs, crowd close in, yet careful not to crush us, and one may pat their little heads. To-morrow there are candidates for baptism in a neighbouring congregation, and with skill our Chinese friend puts his abrupt and somewhat puzzling questions. He can well discern the persons worthy to join the Church.

Next day we are among half-a-dozen villages again, and find our way back in the deepening darkness, along narrow and tortuous paths. It is difficult to recognise our village, for those bamboo clumps on the flat plain are exactly like one another, and there are no spires, or tall buildings, or conspicuous trees. When supper is over the Christians come in according to their wont, and we must talk and worship with them. Thus the days pass till we return to Chang-wha for a little rest, and then Mr Brown-Horse Wood goes off in one direction, and I go off in another.

The reader may be curious to know something of his family life. He will be disappointed. Mrs Wood is an excellent woman, with a mild, pleasant, and somewhat patient

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expression, reminding one of a Madonna. But, of course, our worthy couple have little spiritual converse. I once remarked to Mr Wood that the desirable thing in a wife was spiritual-mindedness. "And strength of body," he replied with emphasis. Mrs Wood has strength of body, and needs it, for her task is no light one. The house is like a hotel, and it is always uncertain how many guests may sit down at dinner or supper, or how many beds may have to be provided for passing strangers. Christians on business, Christians on pleasure, Christians coming to consult the doctor, all these drop in at the most awkward hours, and many a time when the children's rice has been cooked it is devoured by strangers, and the long-suffering Mrs Wood must kindle a fresh fire and prepare a second meal. Or again it happens that preparations have been made; those who seemed to accept the invitation—invitations and acceptances have often a curious vagueness about them—have gone to a restaurant, or have been entertained elsewhere; and Mrs Wood is left with a great pot of rice on her

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hands: she keeps pigs. The financial burden of all this hospitality is very considerable; and there are thoughtless Christians, especially new hearers from distant villages, who think nothing of living for days at the minister's expense. Fortunately it is permissible to take money from guests; it is sometimes offered, and sometimes accepted.

Quiet family life is out of the question. In the houses of Hakka Chinese it is, indeed, permissible for guests to eat with parents and children; but, according to the notions of ordinary Chinese, this is making far too free, and thus, if strangers appear, mother and daughters take their seats after the male portion of the company have withdrawn. Often we have hastened to rise from the repast lest the women should be kept waiting too long. Brown-Horse Wood has three young daughters; God has not given him sons. I tell the Chinese that if we only loved God as the minister's second daughter loves her father, we should have cause to rejoice over the Formosan Church. She will hardly let him out of her

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sight; she cries and clings to him when he would go upon a journey. When he goes to preach in the church she climbs upon the pulpit; when he speaks upon the street she accompanies him, and interrupts his eloquence by tugging at his dress or queue. Not a day passes, I am sure, without his buying for her some cake, or dainty, from a passing street-vendor, and when he returns from a journey he does not come empty-handed. Chinese family life is not as ours; but it has a beauty and charm of its own. Mr Brown-Horse Wood may not feel much of what we call "love" for his wife; in any case it would be improper to display it. Yet he is kind and not inconsiderate.

His friendships, however, are with men, and a delightful friend he is. He is ever willing, never weary, a genial, lovable man.

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# CHAPTER VI

## SOME CHINESE CHRISTIANS

*(Continued)*

THE ablest and most scholarly of the ministers and preachers are frequently to be found among the Christians of the second generation. Such men, however, have naturally less variety of incident in their career, and are apt to display less individuality in their character. Some who made choice of Christianity in their youth, in time to receive a thorough training, exhibit a fine union of piety and learning. Such a man is Mr Yellow (Ng Tsok-pang). When he was yet a child his Heathen mother was told by a fortune-teller that he could not live long. As this prediction was falsified, his faith in Heathen superstition was shaken, and when, at a later period, sickness brought him to the Christian hospital, he became a follower of Jesus.



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If you wish to meet one who will shepherd his flock, and feed them on choice pastures when Sabbath comes, and go out alone to gather in the Heathen with unwearied effort day by day, so far as his delicate health permits, you must look for such a man as Mr Yellow. He has a strong, bright, warm-hearted Aboriginal for his wife; it is not too much to call her a charming woman, full of piety and mirth, a pupil of whom the Christian Girls' School may well be proud. There are two black-eyed bairns, a girl and a boy. The father often illustrates his sermons with stories from the life of his little daughter. When he had lived in one place for five years one of his congregation said, "He was a strict man, rebuking us when he saw anything amiss; yet few of us can mention his name without tears." And as he spoke my worthy friend had tears in his eye. Mr Yellow is a quiet, grave man, with more heart than appears on the surface, and with a conscience. He is a man whose goodness grows upon one. He works as ever in his Great Taskmaster's eye. With what

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eagerness he seeks to persuade a backward congregation to learn the art of prayer, urging, forcing, all to take a part, and then when the object seems attained his prayers for them are turned to praises, and at midnight he rises from his bed to render thanks to God.

One may say what one pleases to Mr Brown-Horse Wood; but this man is more sensitive; one must be careful not to hurt his feelings.

His cousin, Mr Flourishing Yellow, is still more sensitive. He has a blunt un-Chinese manner, and is not everywhere popular. But his discourses are full of matter; he is a faithful pastor, and an excellent man of business. His conversion came on this wise. He was a teacher in a Heathen school and an opium-smoker, when some friend, meeting him out of doors, inquired whether he was well. "Not very well," he replied. His friend rejoined, "Your sickness is not, I think, of the body, but of the soul." He did not understand; his friend invited him to Church; he got as far as the door, but did not venture in. His friend

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sought him out, and together they entered the House of God. He did not understand much, and at prayer-time he kept his eyes wide open; but he noticed that the prayers spoke much of love. He now became a regular worshipper, and, giving up opium, though not yet a Christian, he was appointed teacher of the Christian school. Twice he fell back into opium-smoking, and this being reported to the missionaries, it was resolved to give up the school. "But," asked the missionary, "if we give up the school, have you any means of livelihood?" "Oh, God will provide," said Mr Yellow, meaning little by these words, I daresay. He lost his work, though not well pleased with those who had informed the missionary. At this point he had read Matthew's Gospel as far as the fifth chapter, and did not relish the words about the sin of being angry at one's brother without cause. But when he came to the last words of the chapter, "Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect," this verse pierced his conscience, and he saw that except he trusted in the grace of God he

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could not be saved. As Mr Flourishing Yellow told me his story he lamented that, after explaining salvation very fully, he still heard the Heathen say, "O yes, we ought to live a good life," and he sometimes wondered whether the fault was his, in not putting the matter more clearly, so as to let them understand that no good life of their own could save them. He was surprised to hear from me that in our land the same sort of blindness prevailed, and then talking together of 1 Cor. I., and such like passages, we agreed that no learning but only the Spirit of God could reveal those truths so simple, so profound. He remarked that at first he did not much care for Paul's epistles; they did not touch his heart and conscience; afterwards, when he went to college, he understood them better. I like this man, quiet, straightforward, rather glum and ready to take offence, but with a grateful memory for kindnesses, and with a conscience easily wakened.

He, again, had a relative, Deep River by name, a notable robber who hurt his leg on some midnight expedition, and was obliged to

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visit the Hospital at Tainan. He became a Christian, and for thirty years an unskilled but very useful preacher, till he died at the age of sixty.

And who that remembers old Pa can think of him without admiration and love? How the crowds on the streets of Tainan city used to gather and increase when they caught the sound of his kindling eloquence! An ill-doing rowdy he had once been, and greatly given to gambling. In vain he had gone to the temple and vowed that he would never gamble more. In vain he had, perhaps, taken a bowl in his uplifted right hand, and, dashing it to the ground, had exclaimed, "May my life be thus broken if ever I handle playing-cards again:" or, he had lighted a candle, and, blowing it out, had bound himself by a curse, saying, "So let my life be quenched if ever again I touch dice."

He gambled; he vowed; he gambled again. But one day he passed the door of a preaching-hall. He listened; he obeyed; he gambled no more. This man, too, like Deep River, wit-

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Rev. B.-H. Wood.

Old Chin.

MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

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nessed for some thirty years, I suppose, a good confession. Warm-hearted, lovable Pa!

Humbler Christians must not be forgotten. There is old Chin, the ex-scavenger, who heard Mr Flourishing Yellow on the temple steps, and thereupon resolved to return home without the incense which he had come to purchase. Though already fifty-nine years of age, he at once set himself to learn to read; and he now spells out the words, and conducts worship when no trained preacher happens to be available. He did not like to be taunted by the Heathen for selling manure on week-days and speaking about God on Sundays; so he took up a pedlar's business, and now rejoices when the Heathen women praise his honesty and good measure. All through the week, as he goes from door to door, he speaks when he has opportunity. When Saturday comes round he is off to the villages with his gong and hymn-book. He delights to tell the people of the happiness that he has found. Formerly, he cries, he worked 360 days a year, and more than 360 days, for moonlight found him still gathering what he

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could from the city streets. But then, to-day's earnings were not enough for to-morrow morning's wants; one after another, his children died; his eyes were sunken, his cheeks were hollow. Thus did those dead bits of wood protect him. But now five days a week he works, and has enough and to spare; and on Saturdays you hear the clangour of his gong, "kwy, kwy," while he preaches about God and Jesus; and see his shoes (he lifts one foot), and his fine coat (he plucks a sleeve), his family gave him this on his sixtieth birthday (he proudly twitches his straggling old beard). Is not this happiness?

Such is his favourite theme. He can, on occasion, be more evangelical, if he tries; but he is not even now so much at home in the Gospel story, and sometimes, when he gives a long account of the birth of Jesus, he forgets to mention His death. Yet there is in him, at the bottom, a feeling of dependence upon Christ, a teachableness and absence of self-righteousness which show us that we have made no mistake in admitting him a member of the Church. His wife, whom he brought with him, is still,

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after nine years, excluded from the membership. There is nothing reprehensible in her conduct, but hers is a different spirit.

Yes; a wonderful old man is uncle Chin, with all his faults, quick temper, vanity, and pride of office; these things lie on the surface, but how hearty he is, how willing to help, how diligent in business, how generous with his hard-earned money! When he has made a profit of fourpence or fivepence, he reckons that he has had a good day's business; with his frugal habits a penny almost suffices for the cost of his daily food; but he is no niggard; when church funds are wanted he can always subscribe from two shillings to eight, and when a place of worship had to be erected, he was ready with the two pounds which he had saved to buy himself a coffin.

I like to watch the influence of Jesus on this old fellow. When the toils of a journey oppress us, and, with a load hanging from his shoulders, he buffets the fierce north wind, or staggers across a ford, or grows faint with hunger and heat, he reminds us that such

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troubles are not to compare with those that Jesus endured for our sakes.

One would scarcely expect to find in this old ex-scavenger the manners of a gentleman; but like all Chinese, he has some knowledge of the rules of ceremony; he makes bows and polite speeches in the correct fashion, and well understands how to preside at the festive board.

Our friend, Brother Right, is a different type of character. He resembles a Scottish farmer or ploughman, plain and unpolished, blunt and outspoken, not very quick of apprehension, yet a judge of character, sometimes showing a good deal of tact, sometimes offending people by the want of it. His most remarkable quality, perhaps, is his warm friendliness and helpfulness. No matter how long and troublesome the journey, he is always willing to go upon any errand; his special delight and forte, however, is to visit the Christians, and, with his rude, Socratic method, to prove to them their ignorance of spiritual things. I do not know whether they always welcome this treatment, but he has words of

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cheer also for those that are sick, and kindly advice for those that are in difficulties. I make special mention of this man, not because he is the only Christian who is thus willing and friendly, but because he has, what so few of the Chinese possess, something like a religious experience. He cannot, indeed, explain such matters with the skill of his educated and versatile friend, Mr Brown-Horse Wood, and his own autobiography is somewhat confused; but he tells how, in his heathen days, he used sometimes to hear Chinese and Missionaries preach, and could not make anything of what he heard; how he took umbrage when some of the Aboriginal Christians chid him for gathering sticks in a wood that belonged to them; how afterwards, he came to worship, as others were doing, because he thought the church the stronger party, and able to protect him against possible enemies; how he joined the church and was chosen a deacon without really understanding what salvation meant; and how, by and by, in a manner which he leaves unexplained, he found peace coming into his heart.

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When he had been a Christian for some years, he was appointed a colporteur. His sales were not very large, but one kind of work he pursued with great diligence: wherever he went he sought to hint to the Christians that a man might be a hearer and even a member without becoming a partaker of salvation. This, indeed, it might almost be said, is the one theme of his talk. Brother Right is not a perfect character, but he is an excellent companion and friend; perhaps, of all Chinese known to me, he is the man who counts no service troublesome.

Some of our best friends have died of malignant fever or of consumption. Among these was Brother Promise, of "Ant-eater-hill." When first I visited this town, four miles from Chang-wha, the street was filled with about three hundred listeners or spectators. Standing on a bench, and speaking till I was hoarse, I seemed to be making the Good Tidings known to many.

As I repeated my visits once a week, or once a fortnight, the audiences of course fell off, till

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I was glad enough to see fifty or sixty standing round. All unawares to me a young farmer from a village half-a-mile away was becoming more and more interested, till, as he expressed it, he could not leave off, and he used to quit his farm work as soon as he heard that I was there. The sentence that arrested his attention was the Chinese version of the hymn-lines which tell how the name of Jesus soothes a man's sorrows and fills his heart with joy. He began to come to worship every Sunday. He lived with his wife's parents; his father-in-law was a sorcerer; all three regarded his new religion with strong detestation. When he sought by lamplight to acquire the alphabet his wife blew out the light, and did not hesitate to fling his Bible and hymn-book into a ditch. Chinese, whatever their feelings may be, are commonly courteous, but when I called they did not so much as ask me to come in; and when, by and by, he stepped down from the tread-mill pump with which he was flooding the fields, and led me indoors, even then his mother-in-law glared at me, and his lean and hungry-

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looking wife asked whether Christians sat in their chairs waiting for God to feed them. Brother Promise, with a smile on his broad face, advised me to waste no words in arguing with them; and, firm as a rock, he continued witnessing a good confession. It was a pleasure to hear this Christian speak; there was a warmth in his words about Jesus that one seldom hears when Chinese talk to the Heathen. By and by he had the happiness of seing a church established at "Ant-eater-hill." He helped to plaster the walls, but expressed his shame that, with the family all opposed, he could contribute only a small sum of money. Next season, malarial fever laid hold of him; he declared that he saw Jesus with a white flag coming to take him, and, with messages of farewell on his lips, he left this hot unfriendly world.

Deacon Squirrel is another man deserving to be remembered. Originally a baker by trade, he rapidly made money by contracting for Japanese work. He learned something of Christianity from a druggist who had come to live in his town, and when a church was estab-

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lished he was one of the first hearers. There never was a more attentive worshipper. By and by when it was time to establish a branch church in a neighbouring village he at once offered to pay the rent of the shop that was hired for the purpose. He knew all about building, and when we had to erect a little house for ourselves he was the man to superintend the job. For six months he devoted himself to this task; every one marvelled at the cheapness of the building when it was complete, for our friend Deacon Squirrel insisted that the master-joiner and the master-mason should employ none but diligent men. He himself laid out a good deal in travelling expenses; yet when all was done he would not have the smallest reward for his services. "At least let us give you your travelling expenses." "No," he replied, "I cannot preach, but this is a work that I can do for the glory of God." And then he added how, if he had been as he was in his heathen days, he could easily have found means of rewarding himself by surcharging us for all materials. I remember how one day

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a barber ventured to seat himself beside Deacon Squirrel. The Chinese display wonderfully little of caste or class feeling; the rich and the poor meet and converse very freely. But our master of works remarked to me that if he had been a Heathen he would have put the barber off the seat at once. It must not be thought, however, that he was a boastful Christian. On the contrary, he was humble, and very eager to learn, quite unspoiled by his prosperity. When his wife was a candidate for baptism he bore witness, perhaps with a tear in his eye, that whatever faults of viciousness and quick temper there might have been in himself in heathen days, she had ever been a most dutiful and irreproachable character.

We all grudged the loss of Deacon Squirrel. But the time came when consumption laid him low. The Chinese like to have a well-attended funeral, with trumpet-blowing and drums. Christian funerals are, indeed, a means of drawing new hearers, for when the Heathen see a coffin followed by a hundred mourners, with banners flying, they

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are ready to exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." I remember how an old opium-smoker who had begun to attend one of our churches was pressed by the Christians to come to the hospital at Chang-wha in order to break off the habit. "I am afraid that if I break off so suddenly I shall turn ill and die," grumbled the old man. "Well, if you should die," they rejoined, "Chang-wha will be a good place to die in; we have a large congregation there, and you will have a crowded funeral." Deacon Squirrel on his death-bed was looking forward, if one may say so, to his own funeral, a crowded funeral, in good old Chinese style, with drums and trumpets; but the younger preachers, who had been Christians from boyhood, had tried to prohibit the native music, and the sick man knew that it was so. The preacher tells with pleasure how on the last day of his life, with a voice husky and weak, Deacon Squirrel said, "Never mind about the trumpets and drums."

It is well that we should understand some-



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thing of the thoughts of Christian Chinese upon their death-beds. A young doctor lay dying of the plague. He took his mother's hand in his own right hand, and with the other he grasped his wife's, while he told them not to weep for his time was come and God was calling him home. "I am going home to Heaven," he cried. "Jesus is coming, Jesus is coming; do you not see Jesus coming? I am going home to Heaven." And, clapping his hands for joy, a little later he fell asleep.

One of the Chang-wha converts was a woman of some means who had received the Gospel through the hospital. When she and her sister appeared as candidates for baptism they exhibited a most refreshing sense of sin and of the grace of salvation, and they were admitted without much delay. The husband of the one was a detective in Japanese employ; the other was married to a shoemaker; both these men remained heathen, but in no way hindered their wives. By and by the detective's life was suddenly cut short, and his wife,

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who had never been strong, grew gradually weaker. A Chinese patient is not allowed much quiet; the Christian women, after the Sabbath service or after their women's prayer-meeting on Tuesday afternoon, used to crowd in to enquire for her. Just as she lay dying she called for a change of dress. "I am about to appear before my Lord," she said, "and I must go into His presence with clean apparel, not a spot of defilement on my garments."

Several of the Christian women are well worthy of our acquaintance; but, in the case of some of the best, one can record no striking incident or remarkable saying. There is that kindly old woman, Sister Small, who heard us speak upon the street from the verse of the hymn about the name of Jesus, and became a worshipper forthwith. One never visits the town of Tang-twa-toon without receiving from her the present of a fowl, cooked and steaming hot. Then there is the miller's wife, a hospital convert, a clever woman, an eager listener, always bright, always serious. Her praise is that although her Heathen

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husband has married a secondary wife, she treats her as a sister; she does not exemplify the Chinese proverb that of ten wives nine hate the concubine. Our friend, whose name is Silver, is a deft needlewoman, and with her busy fingers earns enough to make handsome contributions to church funds.

We have masculine women, too. One such is a widow who, when her husband died, carried on his trade of silver-smith; several of the Heathen told me that they had listened to her discourse in the church of Lok-kang or Deer-mouth.

In the extreme south of our district there lives an interesting old woman, a very imperfect character. Having heard something of Christianity, she wished to learn more, and at last her desire was gratified when an old Christian medicine-seller visited the place and lodged in her home. "I must be off the day after to-morrow," he declared; but there fell a great rain (and she thanked God), which kept him a prisoner for the next month. Even then she would not let him go, but

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hid his turban and cloak. "I will not let you depart," she cried, "unless you send some one in your place to teach me." Having engaged to send a certain "Bright Pearl," he went his way. Now the old woman's troubles began. Her son beat her with a bamboo, seventy strokes, and tried to force filth down her throat, while the neighbours called on her to renounce her new religion. "Though he tear me limb from limb," she replied, "I will not cease to worship God." "And ought not I," she remarked to us, "to be willing to suffer for Him who suffered so much for me?"

By and by, seeing that the little meeting-room at "Two Hillocks" was in want of a reading-desk, or rather table, she secretly sold some of the family rice, and hinted to her three sons that the rats had devoured it.

After being three years a worshipper, she came seeking baptism, because, as her friends told her, it was high time that so old a woman were "washed." She brought in with her an ignorant old friend, patting her on the back

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in an encouraging way. But when the aged friend could answer none of my questions, and would not so much as confess that she had ever done any wrong, old Mrs Lew tapped her on the breast in the most comical way, remarking, "She has not received the Holy Spirit; she does not understand."

I must not conclude these slight sketches without inserting some imperfect picture of that delightful young man whose name is Joyful Spring. For several months I had heard some of our friends talk of him, and I felt most curious to see him. They told us that he belonged to the town of Two Woods, and how, when he learned from a Christian silversmith about the true God, he informed his father that he must cease from the trade of idol-maker in which father and son were engaged. The opium-smoking parent beat him black and blue, and, under protest, Spring resumed his work. Secretly, however, he wrote upon the paper lanterns, which he prepared, a text from the Chinese classics, "Sin against Heaven and you have no for-

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giveness." The customers came back with their lanterns, asking, "What means this?" The father repeated the question, and emphasized it with blows. And thus passed weeks and months. The son could seldom go to church; for if he even passed over the doorstep his father must have his eye upon him. Meantime the Christians were planning and plotting, that wise woman, the silversmith, taking her share in the consultations. We were willing to receive him if he could make his escape. One day he told his father that he was unwell, and must see the Japanese doctor in a large town some ten miles off. But he lied to him; it was for Chang-wha he was bound, and that was full twenty miles away. He reached Chang-wha; I took him to help me on the street; his voice seemed feeble, and he was imperfectly heard. Would his old opium-smoking father follow him? We thought it advisable to double the distance between them. We had been praying that somehow a beginning might be made in the northern town of Cow-roaring-head, where no

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Christians were. I had rented a room at eight shillings a year, and there, at long intervals, I had stayed some five times for a few days. Spring and I went thither, explaining and exhorting on the streets all day for about a week. On Saturday evening two young men called upon us. On Sunday they came to our first service, and we seemed to have the nucleus of a congregation. On Monday I returned to Chang-wha. A month later I visited the place once more. When supper was finished, ten men and boys were gathered round our table, and the confused noise of men reciting lines of hymns and boys reciting rows of letters was like the sweetest music. It seems that while we were preaching on the street, that countryman who had been in search of the origin of all things was among the listeners; and now with him came mother and wife and sons and daughter-in-law, three generations, with the promise of a fourth. Later in the evening came a stout red-faced woman, a scolding old vegetarian, who had heard something of the stir attending the advent of the

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new religion. She brought her two boys, and before many weeks had passed she introduced a relative of hers, a woman from a village about two miles away. This last had to endure a great deal from her husband, and had we not been comforted by the thought that fear of the Japanese authorities would surely restrain him, we might have expected some fatal hurt; she was quite prepared to die. "No matter," she said, "if I am beaten, not to death, I shall come to the hospital; if I die, I shall go to Heaven."

So, in a month or two, Spring had his congregation gathered, and ere long twenty or thirty persons might be found at worship every Sabbath day.

And now our friend had grown quite a powerful speaker; I found myself eclipsed. But how extraordinary his diligence was! Busy all day preaching to the Heathen in every village, in every hamlet, it was vain to hope to find him indoors ere the sun was down. Even then he had barely time to cook and eat; for the Christians were in to learn their alpha-

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bet or hymn, or to spell out some chapter of the New Testament; he must help the struggler, and rouse the laggard, and presently he is off to enquire what hinders Brother A, why not at worship last Sunday, why not conning his lesson to-night. When Joyful Spring went down to the College six months later, his fellow-students gave him the appropriate nickname Mother-hen Spring.

We need not follow him through his career. When he emerged from college once more he was marked by the same wonderful diligence; but he had learned to give a little more time to study, and his congregation could no longer remark, as one of them once did, "You vary your text; but you preach the same discourse every Sunday." Every one loves Spring, that simple, unselfish, transparent soul. A learned man he will never be, nor has he, any more than other Chinese Christians have, a firm grasp of doctrine, or a deep knowledge of sin and grace. Faithful, unworldly Spring, most un-Chinese in this that he grudged the few days which had to be spent in arranging for his own

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marriage, and when his newly-wedded bride took cold on the way to his sphere of labour he complained of the serious loss of time, a day spent in waiting for her recovery. If all Chinese preachers were diligent as this man is, in one short year the Gospel might easily be preached again and again in every Formosan village.

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# CHAPTER VII

## THE DIFFICULTIES OF MISSIONARY LIFE

THE wife of a missionary in Japan remarked to me that friends at home heard too much of the bright side, too little of trials and difficulties. This saying is true. Missionaries are, it may be granted, a somewhat peculiar people, and do not always feel so acutely as might be expected the loneliness and discouragement, the heat and weariness of a residence abroad, sometimes, like Chalmers of New Guinea, treating discomforts as the pepper and salt of life, and often finding a keen enjoyment in their work. And, no doubt, some of those who are now crowding one another in the Homefield would find service abroad a much more congenial task: it is right that such persons should be allured by those prospects of "delightful labours" with which men like John Williams entice them. But, for the ordinary church



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member, or Christian worker, or minister, life in the Mission-field would probably be almost insupportable. And yet, even if the bitter be mingled with the sweet in most unpleasant proportions, those who are worthy will not decline the undertaking; we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.

The first difficulty is that of climate. Some find it less trying than they anticipated. For others the gloomiest apprehensions prove a mere shadow of the reality.

The raw recruit, arriving in the cool season, is at once struck with the fact that some at least of the missionaries are in a state of sickliness and constant weariness. By and by the hot season draws on: at first he thinks the temperature not so unbearable after all; somewhat later a feeling of despair settles upon him; he thought, perhaps, of cool nights, but the oppressive stillness of the dark hours seems a poor exchange for the furnace blasts of noon. An older missionary complains of the heat. "Do you not become acclimatized?" An

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emphatic "No," is the reply. One does not become acclimatized. Rather, as the years go by, the summer becomes more exhausting. But then, again, there are Europeans like salamanders, revelling in that strange unearthly glow.

Of a second sort of trouble I say little; but some would judge that it is the only one worth mentioning, and every Society has plentiful experience of it in every part of the field. I mean the difficulty that missionaries have in working harmoniously together.

Do not be surprised. If you are surprised, it is because no vivid picture of the Heathen world has heretofore presented itself to you.

Have you never heard that the most godly old minister finds it often very difficult to bear with the manners of his excellent colleague? Now it ought to be known that missionaries are seldom planted down each by himself, with a separate charge of his own: on the contrary, two or three, or half-a-dozen families are set down together, with the hospitals, colleges, schools, and perhaps fifty churches, under their

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joint control. Work abroad is of such a character that each missionary is obliged more or less—it ought, I think, to be less—to interfere with other men's or women's work, as well as to mind his or her own business. And, to make matters worse, native Christians, bent on gaining their object, have a way of running from one European to another, so fomenting jealousies.

But the picture is unfinished. Have you ever heard that two or three lighthouse-keepers, set upon a solitary rock, are rather apt to fall out with one another? Such is the situation of the missionary. Colleagues in Christendom have means of withdrawing their thoughts from rivalries; they have a large circle of friends; they may turn their attention to public matters; they have a refuge in science and literature. Missionaries are cooped up in their watch-tower, alone amid a population that is hostile, alien, at best strange. One is reminded of Nansen's crew, shut up in a ship, and, when ashore, taking each his separate track across the ice; or of the stories of the old voyages in sail-

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ing ships, none of the passengers on speaking terms with his cabin-mate.

Of course, too much must not be made of this sort of trial. The blessings of spiritual fellowship will often far outweigh the drawbacks from incompatibility of temper. But the hindrance is a great and wide-spread one, from which the saintliest souls have not been free. And, if any one, seldom tempted, has seldom failed, it becomes him, not to glory, but to see in the faults of others the fashion of his own heart.

It may be thought that the resemblance to light-house-keepers or shipmates is not very close. Are not the missionaries surrounded by swarms of natives, and may they not soothe their irritated feelings in a "cordial and coalescing" intimacy with native Christians?

To tell the truth, this suggestion is only bringing us nearer to the main difficulty, the fount of many troubles. For now we must speak of the great barrier of race. No home-keeping philanthropist, or fireside lover of missionary enterprise, can ever appreciate the

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strength of this barrier. It is a great thing if, after years of perhaps uncongenial toil, the ambassador of Christ can at last converse with ease, and no sense of strain and failure. Very many, after a lifetime of service, have still to encounter the daily discomfort and provocation of misunderstanding and being misunderstood. It is well-known, for example, that in Japan, after three years' study, a man does not consider himself backward if he is only beginning to preach to the people without an interpreter, and that, among some 700 missionaries, only a very few have learned to speak with fluency and grace.

Even if one can discourse in public with some correctness, yet when an apt illustration or anecdote occurs to the mind, it may often be suppressed for want of the fitting language to clothe the thought; or if one essay to describe the construction of a locomotive, or of some cantilever bridge, and talk of caissons and diving bells; or if it falls upon one to direct the building of house or church, one discovers with distress and humiliation that, after



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many years of learning, one is but a learner still.

Suppose that native Christians are narrating some interesting event: the strain of trying to follow the story will often mar the pleasure of listening. And how fatiguing it is to look into some complicated dispute; one sees all things through a glass darkly, or must often interrupt the speaker to demand elucidations.

Wearied with work that is never done, exhausted by the climate, fettered by the language, it will be no great wonder if the missionary sometimes dreads, rather than welcomes, the converse of the saints.

I do not say that this discipline is needless or useless. A modern apostle is in danger of being exalted above measure. He is like a schoolmaster among children; but when language is concerned, he is a child among schoolmasters, and he finds himself outrivalled by some ignorant Christian coolie. And when he grows impatient at what seems vague, indistinct speech, or anon at what seems stupid, unintelligent hearing, and then again feels vexed at his

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own vexation, he learns that indeed a messenger of Satan is always ready to buffet him.

But, after all, the obstacle of language is only the wire-entanglement on the outside of the fortification; more formidable barriers remain. The customs, the personal habits, the houses, the character of the people, still force one to feel, after years of intimacy, that a foreigner can never be perfectly at home in the land of his adoption. How one wishes that one's nature could be changed, that one could be born again, with Chinese thoughts and feelings. Every day the sense of this race distinction is a gnawing pain.

And then it is a Heathen, or at best Heathen-Christian, society that encircles the lonely missionary. The conscious oppression of feeling is very great; the unconscious or subconscious oppression is far greater. Not that, among the Chinese, there is much to remind one that the land is full of idols. But it daily crushes a man's spirit to know that the things most dear to him are nothing at all to them. To the sentimental lover of

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missions it may seem a joy to declare for the first time the Good News, while the wondering Heathen drinks it in. But the Heathen is not wondering; he is not drinking it in. In childhood we sang the hymn:

> "Go sound the trump on every shore,
> And bid the Heathen weep no more."

The Heathen is not weeping. In his dull way he is happy enough, and not much aware of any need except that of food and clothes. He quite enjoys listening to preaching, and sometimes tells us that it is better than watching the performance of a play; he likes to hear his idols ridiculed, and sometimes assents with heartiness to the doctrine of the one God; but the story of Jesus is a fairy-tale of which he often grows tired before it is all told, or, if persuaded to hear the end, he laughs at the account of the crucifixion, and soon forgets all; indeed he says plainly that it goes in at the one ear and out at the other. Ah, when the perspiration flows, and flesh and heart fail in the sultry heat, how refreshing it would be if there were but one who thanked God that Jesus

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died. There is not one; they do not understand. See there the women troop off before one has well begun, declaring that they can make nothing of it. And such as remain are far less attentive than they seem. Those who know how the spirituality of a British audience reflects itself back on the speaker, will perhaps dimly perceive that the secularity of a Heathen audience is apt to reflect itself on the missionary. What an unnatural week-day feeling settles on one's heart in the midst of the most sacred work. We are made a spectacle to men. If, perchance, the coldness of the audience has sometimes the effect of rousing the speaker to urgency and vehemence and solemn warning, the people think that he is mad, and the women complain that the little ones have been injuriously frightened. I have sometimes looked in Heathen eyes, and thought, or wished to think, that I detected a tear there: or was it only the influence of the cold north wind?

"But have you not your Christians, and do not they give you great encouragement?" Now this is a matter in which the notions of godless

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merchants abroad and godly Christians at home are equally far astray. The critic of missions talks of rice-Christians, and imagines that the worshippers come from interested motives. The lover of missions imagines that native converts are saints who put to the blush the luke-warm professors of Christendom. I suppose that rice-Christians may be found somewhere; I have not met them. The native worshippers known to me contribute, in proportion to their income, very much more than do church members in the West: as for any help received, it is help given not to individuals but to new congregations where ground must be bought for church sites, and buildings must be erected. In the field best known to me the Christian congregations, small as they are, contribute five or six times as much as they get from Europe.

We have no rice-Christians; nor are the moral results of mission work at all disappointing. On the contrary, I am so surprised at the way in which Chinese Christians break off the habit of opium-smoking that I

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am tempted to regard the opium habit as much less enslaving than the vice of drunkenness; but then I remember that Heathen cured of this evil are almost invariably lured back to their pipe; and again I observe that victory over this habit does not stand alone, the Christians are equally remarkable for their deliverance from every sort of vice; gambling and immorality, so common outside the Church, seldom find entrance there.

I am intimately acquainted with the affairs of about twenty-five congregations; in the course of ten years I have not met with any instance of unfaithfulness in the administration of Church funds.

It is not in morality but in religion that one finds a lack; I could sometimes desire, if I may say so, a little less morality and a little more religion.

It is cheering, no doubt, to watch the rapid growth of the Church, and marvellous to find how a few words spoken in a town or village are again and again the means of withdrawing a man from all his associates, and

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uniting him with this new, despised, foreign sect.

But how uninteresting it is to talk with the new "convert." His conversation is not "of Jesus and His love;" it is all of the vanity of idol-worship and of the protecting power of the true God. Remember the pit out of which he has been digged. His Heathen neighbours make occasional offerings to the idols simply for the sake of health and wealth. The new Christian has discovered that it is God who gives health and wealth. He is, if you will have it so, a rice-Christian, only the supplies that he looks for are not from men, but from God. Of course, many get past this low carnal stage, and from the beginning worthier desires have mingled. But among many thousands of worshippers it would seem as if there were perhaps only a dozen or a score who understand the rudiments of Christianity as we understand them.

Sir William Macgregor shewed that he had an insight into the character of native Christianity when he remarked that it would

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ABORIGINAL CHRISTIANS.

RAW CHINESE CONVERTS.

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be inappropriate to speak of "spiritual conversion" in the case of the church-goers of New Guinea.[1]

I am very far from saying that the converted Chinese are few; but those who have any definite experience of conversion, those, even, who can give a satisfactory reason for the hope that is in them are very few.

We have dwelt upon this in another place. It will surely be understood that among the difficulties encountered by the messenger of Christ the chief is this absence of fellowship among the people with whom he longs to be at one. His life is as that of a grown man among children; there are few comrades; when he is preaching the simplest and profoundest truths he is sometimes too well aware that the majority of the listeners, perhaps all but a very few, are "like ducklings listening to thunder."

Oh, do not say that they are ignorant of these things because they have never been taught.

[1] See Lovett's "Autobiography and Letters of James Chalmers," p. 422.

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Mrs Archibald Little speaks of the missionary in China who at last packed up and went home because he could not bear this life of perpetual giving out to others of spiritual things, receiving little or nothing in return. I knew an earnest young engineer who, after patient waiting, went out as a missionary to Africa. He came back to his native place to address a meeting; he told the audience how he had gone out full of warmth, and how he had come back cold, very cold.

I am well aware that many missionaries do not feel these things, or do not keenly feel them. Most, indeed, when they first go abroad, can well appreciate the expression of that lonely pioneer, William Burns of China, about the numbing influence of heathenism. One of the best and most optimistic of living missionaries has told me that when he first settled in China he felt as if he could never smile any more; it was a relief to him when he saw an older missionary laugh. But those who have accepted the call to this work have often, like travellers and explorers, a somewhat

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self-reliant nature, and are not very dependent on companions or sympathizers. And here I may remark that I have often thought of some of my warm-hearted friends in the Home Mission-field, and wondered how their zeal would stand the withering influences of the tropics. I am afraid that one may doubt whether successful workers at home would always prove successful workers abroad. We often fancy that our faith and convictions and feelings are our own, when, as a matter of fact, they belong rather to the Christian society to which we are attached. A missionary must have something of his own to carry with him. But there are other men and women, again, who are so dependent upon God, and receive so much from Him, as to be almost independent of their surroundings. There may be such persons; I have not met many of them: one recalls at least the case of Bowen[1] of Bombay, and one cannot forget this saying of William Burns: "I think I can

[1] I was about to add the name of David Hill, but, on reading his life, I find him no exception to the rule.

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truly say through grace that God's presence or absence alone distinguishes places for me." Nevertheless, it is not to be denied that isolation does not always bear such fruits. When we know how many who were church-goers in the West become non-church-goers in the East, and how fervent men grow luke-warm and worldly in their new environment, and how, in general, even the larger British communities in the Orient have their tone altered and lowered by the Pagan element surrounding them, it need scarcely surprise us that men whose business it is to welcome that element, and make themselves at home in it, seem sometimes to lose the spirituality which once appeared to be theirs. What wonder if the secularity of the Heathen infects the native Christians, who live by twos and threes, by dozens, or at most by scores, in the midst of the people? For example, in South Formosa, a Christian community of 16,000 is dispersed over 740 towns and villages. Is it surprising if, again, the secularity of the Christians slowly and insensibly invades the missionary, or if,

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when he has offered to a congregation, year after year, a kind of goods for which there is little or no demand, he is tempted to withdraw those unsalable commodities from the market, and to put in their place something less evangelical or less evangelistic?

It is very possible that those who at first have felt the numbing influence of heathenism, may, from long exposure, become insensibly inured to it, so that unawares they grow cold and lose their first love; this seems to me a most insidious danger. Or, perhaps, because the glow of feeling has dulled, a man may appear to himself to have lost much, when in truth he has gained more.

But there are those to whom it will seem that there is something terrible in this life in a Heathen land.

> "O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
> Alone on a wide wide sea:
> So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
> Scarce seemèd there to be."

And now what is the lesson to be derived from all this? There is no reason for the

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lovers of missions to be discouraged; rather our inference is full of cheer. For why does the modern missionary feel himself so much alone? Not at all because modern converts are inferior to the earliest Gentile converts, far from it; there is not such a thought in my mind. But during these nineteen centuries *we* have travelled so far, so much further than we realize, that when on a sudden we catch sight of the point from which we set out, we are startled and nonplussed. It may be irksome to the modern Great-heart to have to go back so many a mile in order to bring a batch of pilgrims on their journey, and to have to spend so much time leading them past the dreary confines of Giant Pagan's realm, when he would fain have them straight to the Cross and into the Palace Beautiful. But we, who, from our Delectable Mountains, have scanned in the dim horizon that slow-moving host, may remember that for us the march through those arid plains lies all behind, and may bless God for the way by which He has led. We thought that the Church was standing still; we sometimes

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fancied that we had got astray and had lost our Leader; we heard them crying, "Back to Christ." And we did not know that Christ was in our midst, that it was He who had brought His Church so far, that we in this most Christian land, in this most Christian age, were closer to Him than ever they were before; and we shall yet draw nearer Jesus.

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# CHAPTER VIII

## WHY MISSIONARIES ARE UNINTERESTING

THE lovers of missions will perhaps be ready to protest that missionaries are not uninteresting. But no one can be deaf to a complaint so commonly made, especially when friends of the cause begin to swell the chorus, alleging that those who return from the field display small skill in setting before the public the story of their labours.

I shall not venture to pronounce an opinion. In childhood it was not my lot to hear many missionary speeches; perhaps on that account I listened with the more eagerness. As for more recent experience, it is obvious that I might be apt to give a biased verdict.

But I know that the presence of a missionary in the pulpit sometimes means a thin congregation, and I propose to offer a brief explanation



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of this state of affairs. Our previous discussion has partly prepared us for this. We have seen what sort of impression the Gospel makes upon the Heathen, then what impression the Heathen and Christian-Heathen make upon the Missionary. The sequel is to consider the sort of impression that the Missionary makes upon the British Public.

Every one is aware that the man who knows a subject best is seldom the best able to expound it. The most attractive lecturers on science are not often those who have devoted their lives to original research. The most popular preachers are not the professors of theology; nor are they always such as have most deeply pondered the things of man and God. Great explorers are seldom great orators. The best teacher is perhaps the man who is but a little in advance of his pupils; the preacher whom crowds run after is commonly a man just a little ahead of his audience; the most charming books of travel are not the works of David Livingstone, but the light sketches of such birds of passage as Professor Henry



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Drummond, who, a learner himself, never forgets the learner's point of view. This, indeed, is the essential requirement: it is not necessary to know little of one's subject; but it is necessary to be able to put oneself in the place of the ignorant, keep hold of one's first impressions, and communicate no details except such as the uninitiated naturally desire to know.

Any one may see how difficult this is; and it is little wonder if missionaries do not succeed where men of genius have failed.

The most devoted missionary is sometimes the very man who has lost sight of the "globe-trotter's," or mere visitor's, point of view; the things that struck him most are now unnoticed; the very features of the people are so familiar that he no longer understands how to describe the eyes, or lips, or nose, or hair; he does not *see* such things. He sees as the natives do; in some measure he thinks and even feels as they do. Something of Chinese stolidity may have been infused into his heart, something of the Chinaman's disgust at Western ways, something, even, of the Chinaman's prejudices. Of

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course, if he be a real missionary, he has learned to preach somewhat as natives do, in their off-hand, simple, childlike, not to say childish, manner, without much eloquence. If ever he knew how to preach in his mother tongue, he has been busy unlearning that art. When he left college he had not yet acquired any skill in pulpit eloquence; and now the training received abroad has been, in some respects, rendering him unfit to appear upon a British platform, more unfit, perhaps, than when he bade goodbye to his professors.

Whether, then, they preach the Gospel, or give news from a far land, it is plain that missionaries must sometimes be unpleasing to a British audience. Their preaching, as I have said, will resemble that of the natives, for example, the Chinese; and, from what has been said in previous chapters, it will be understood that very few Chinese sermons are fitted to afford pleasure or profit to intellectual hearers of the West. On the other hand, it is to be remembered that the great preachers of this country, if they were to discourse to a Chinese

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assembly, whether Heathen or Christian, would be quite unintelligible. As regards news from abroad, it ought to be understood that remarkable events are not occurring every day, and one must not look for an ever-flowing stream of curious facts and fresh ideas. With as much reason, nay, perhaps, with more reason, one might ask the Home Missionary to startle the West End with the romance of the "slums." For the religious life of converts in our European cities is often intensely interesting, full of pathos and charm, and one's heart leaps at the thought of lovely souls in lowly places; but the saints of the Far East are as little children, grown-up babes, without the poetry and brightness of youth.

People forget the monotony and dreariness and prose of life in a Heathen land, and "the numbing influence of heathenism"; and thus they are surprised when Christ's ambassadors prove tedious in public speech, and even appear to have dull, narrow, stunted minds. They may be asked to reflect how in the Home land the mind of the Dominie is apt to bear traces of

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the bath in which it is immersed for but a few hours each day. Then let them consider how, all day long, from one year's end to another, the missionary lives in an element of Heathenism, and of a Christianity wholly unlike that twentieth-century religion with which we are all familiar.

. . . . .

Of course, when we think of missionary addresses as dull and tiresome, we may be passing a judgment upon ourselves rather than upon them. Some of us have home-staying minds, and with a genuine desire for the conversion of the Heathen, have little desire to know about foreign lands, or to learn of strange and uncouth ways. Others have home-staying hearts that care very little for the world, and reserve their affections for their own kith and kin. And some have hearts so straitened that, even if Paul and Barnabas passed through their town, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles, and causing joy to all the brethren, yet for them it would be no joy; the victories of Christ are nothing to them.

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The interest in missions is partly a matter of spiritual bias, and we must not hastily complain of those who have no mind for the geography and statistics of missions, with the routine of hospitals, churches, and schools, nor expect that all Christians should be equally enamoured of the details of every enterprise. Perhaps the friends of missions may now and then appear to display something like a persecuting zeal in this matter. We must not press too hardly.

Yet it remains to be said that a lack of interest in Christian missions may simply mark a lack of interest in Christ.

Perhaps I ought to add that the sort of appreciation of mission work which some of its patrons express is of a very dubious character. Such persons think it no shame to announce that at one time they cared nothing for the work of converting the Heathen; but when their attention was directed to the beneficent operations of Christian hospitals, coldness, or opposition, was turned to warm friendliness. Or they declare that when they discovered how

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native converts were sometimes after all (most wonderful!) men of character and of courage, willing to suffer and to die, they then began to regret their wonted scorn, and they will now perhaps deign to be present or preside at some missionary assembly.

This sort of interest we could well dispense with; this patronage we might well despise. As if Paul were worthy of some notice because he healed quite a number of sick people, or as if, after all, he might be reckoned a useful man, because it turns out that he reformed a fair number of licentious characters.

Missionaries ought to beware of appealing to any but the highest motives. It is, doubtless, an interesting thing to know that Christian hospitals are able to accomplish a vast work of philanthropy at a very trifling expense; it cannot but cheer and stimulate the Church of Christ to learn that in our time the Kingdom of God makes rapid conquests; it heartens those who support the cause to be assured that the most lukewarm friends, the severest critics, the bitterest foes, are sometimes compelled to

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pay their tardy, or condescending, or grudging tribute to the moral fruits of missionary enterprise. But did we lay down our lives on the condition that a stipulated number of converts, with a fixed standard of character, should be our recompense? Or do we appeal for funds and *prayers* that a few thousands of Chinese may prolong their lives a little, and gain a little ease from pain? Or did our Lord Jesus come that "a few sick folk" might be healed, and that some of the ruffians of Galilee might be reformed?

The interest that waits to be wooed in this fashion is not a worthy interest.

If to some observers it appears that, after a long siege, the outworks of Paganism are here and there giving way, it is the obvious duty to rush to the attack with shouts and cheers, and those who stand behind the line of fire will not, I think, be slack in handing rations and ammunition to their comrades.

If to others, watching the forces engaged in storming one of the stronger forts, the enterprise seems but a forlorn hope, will they, on

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that account, refuse to cheer, or, seeing the soldiers fall, withhold their aid? Or if it should be thought that some of the combatants are imprudent and badly led, wanting in courage, careful of comfort, poor soldiers at the best, are we on this account to lose our interest in the great fight? Must we not rather spend more money, and equip better men, *till the field be won?*

We have taken up arms, resolved that, come what may, we shall not lay them down till at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

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# CHAPTER IX

## THE SCARCITY OF MISSIONARY WORKERS

In his "Development of Christian Doctrine," Newman speaks of the usefulness of the doctrine of Purgatory. Noble natures, he argues, may be moved by nobler motives; but nothing save the fear of Purgatory will ever send missionaries to China in sufficient numbers.[1] In the middle of the nineteenth century this plea for Purgatory might appear plausible, at the dawn of the twentieth it seems ludicrous. Even if the company of missionaries should remain without further increase, we could venture to hope that the world might soon be evangelized. We must by no means despise the present force, or fancy that with a mere handful of men and

[1] "The Development of Christian Doctrine," Chap. IX. Sect. i. § 5.



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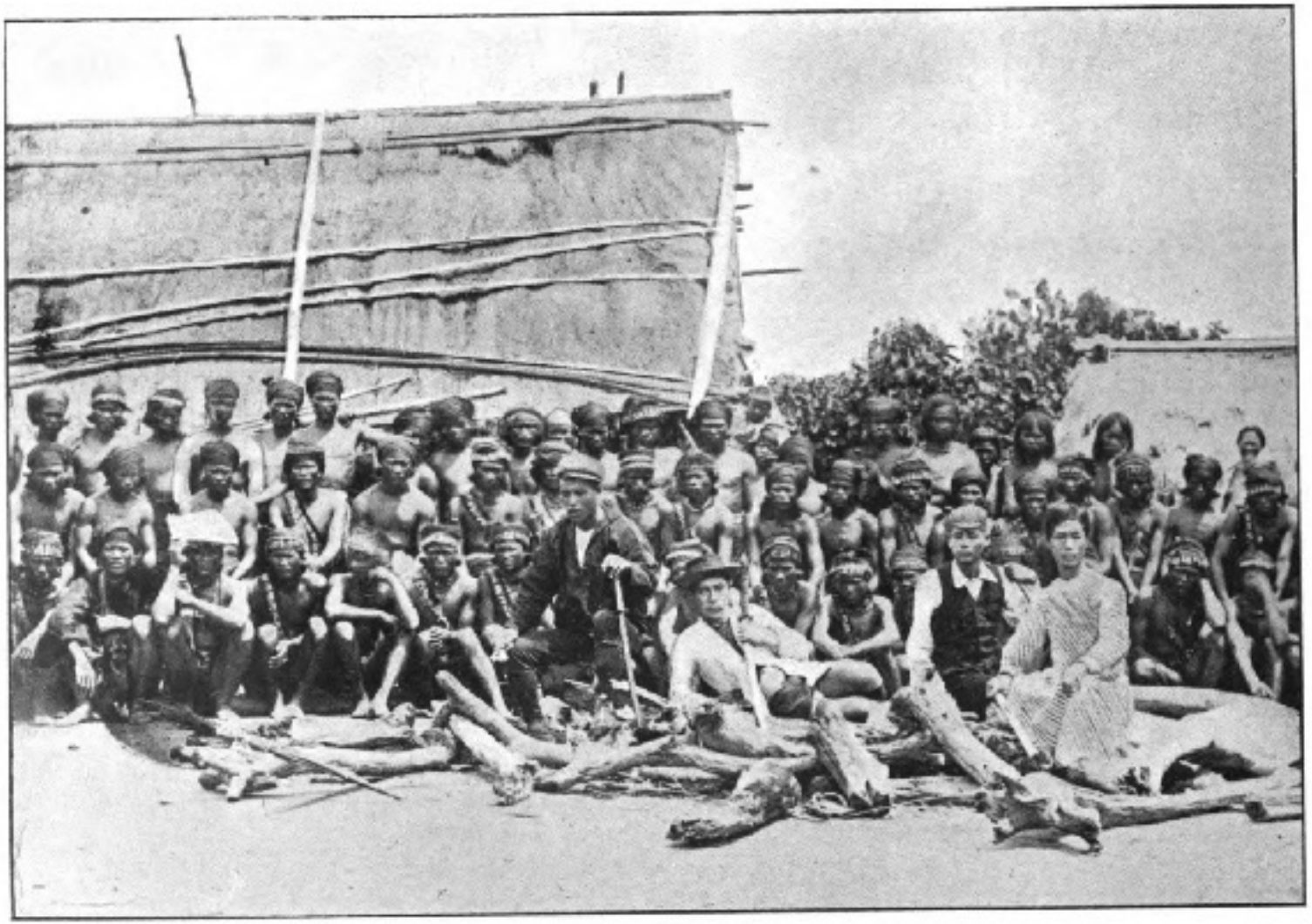

MOUNTAIN SAVAGES
(Four Japanese in Front).

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women we are but playing at missions. The Protestant missionaries now number fully 13,000 (or, including wives of missionaries, 18,000), that is 1 to every 80,000 of the non-Christian population. This is an ill-staffed embassy: and, if one takes into account the fact that a certain proportion must always be on furlough, withdrawn from the field, and that of those in active service a very large proportion are engaged in the work of teaching Christians in colleges and schools, or in the work of pastoral oversight, devoting a small fraction of their days to the duties of the evangelist; it may then appear that the foreign missionaries are a very paltry force. But it is unfair to hide from the view of the British public the great company of native preachers and teachers, about 100,000 strong, or about 1 to every 10,000 of the non-Christian population. Pleas for missions are too apt to suppress all reference to those native ministers. And yet, again, if truth be told, many of them do very little work among the Heathen. Of

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those known to me certainly not more than one-third devote themselves with ardour to this service. One's heart warms at the very thought of some of them, delicate men, perhaps, yet zealous alike in the work of the pastor and of the evangelist. If all preachers were but equally diligent, Formosa would soon be evangelized. And if Formosa, why not the whole world? Formosa's supply of workers is not above the world's average; it is very much below it; and yet if each paid worker were to visit one new village every week, preaching the Gospel there, it is certain that at the end of one year almost all the villages would have had an opportunity of listening. One address to the Heathen per week is an extremely modest allowance: if one takes into account the seasons when the farmers are too busy to pay any heed, one may still reckon that every village might very easily receive a visit every second month. We need more workers; what we need most is the love of Christ constraining those who even now stand at the

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edge of the corn-field with the sickle in their hands.

We have spoken of the missionaries, 1 to every 80,000; of the native workers, 1 to every 10,000; but now the most important element of all is still to be mentioned—the native Christian people, possibly 1 to every 100 of the Heathen population, certainly more than 1 to every 200. The native communicants in all lands number about two millions. "Communicant" and "Christian" are not, of course, synonymous terms, although missionary reports have a way (I had almost said a shameful way), alike misleading and disheartening, of speaking about "Christians" as if they were neither more nor fewer than the adults, or adults and children, who happen to have been baptized. It is as if one were to speak of the Christians of Scotland as numbering about a million. Far be it from me to say that either the members or the church-goers in China are all Christians indeed; but, if we are to number the Christians at all, we must obviously speak

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of the church-goers, those who have exchanged the worship of idols for the service of the living and true God. Now, in South Formosa, the Communicants are about 3000; the Protestant church-goers, men, women, and children, are about 16,000. If one could venture to make these figures the basis of a general calculation, the Protestants in heathen lands would amount to ten millions (10,000,000), or 1 to every 100; at the most cautious estimate they must be more than 1 to every 200.

When we seek to gauge the needs of the Heathen and Mohammedan world, it is most important that we should have in our minds this great body of Christians. But they are not a compact body; they are scattered over the land, the salt of the earth. We are all familiar with the diagram of the great black square, a small speck of white in the centre: in truth the heathen world is a black all specked with white, a black turning to grey, with promise of purest whiteness. The whole world is "spotted with Christianity," and the flakes are

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twice as thickly spread as they were twelve years ago.

In South Formosa alone, as we were astonished to discover, our 3000 Communicants and 16,000 Church-goers are spread over 740 villages; and it is safe to say that in the whole island, which is half the size of Scotland, there are at least 1200 villages in which Protestant Christians dwell. What is true of Formosa is true of many parts of China.

In Formosa, at least, these scattered saints are very well known, often for miles around. They cannot be hid. Why is it that on the Sabbath day their oxen are never seen ploughing the fields? What are these men doing, off to the market-town to-day with books in their hands? And what about these women in holiday attire, hobbling along the narrow track between the miry rice-fields, all in single file, and with children in blue and white, and green and scarlet, following? When this burden-bearer halts at the refreshment stall, and wipes with his head-cloth the sweat that pours down his

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sun-burnt back; why does he pause and close his eyes before he lifts his bowl in the one hand and his chop-sticks in the other? And what are those words that he mumbles as if they were some magic spell? I think, says the Heathen by-stander, he is inviting his God to share his meal. Strange people these Christians! They say that at death the eyes and heart are gouged out and the breasts are cut off, to be turned into opium. That is what the barbarian teachers come for; you know opium comes from England. I stood once at their church door. What a crowd there was, the women all on one side, the men on the other. What! do women come to worship too? Yes; and some of them are very pretty. And when they recite from their book (sing hymns), all with harmonious voice, it is very pleasant to listen. But when they closed their eyes, and uttered their incantations, I ran away, for I was afraid. "It is a good thing to worship God," says one of the customers, "only the Christians have no gods and no ancestors." "Yes," says another,

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"you know that man in the village of 'Sea-pool'; what a temper he had, never opening his lips but to utter foul language; now, revile him as you please, he still returns a civil answer."

"I understand," says a third, "that, when they take the bread and wine, their natures are changed, so that a bad-tempered man becomes a good-tempered one, so that an opium-smoker loses his love of opium, so that a gambler no longer cares to gamble, so that a vicious becomes a virtuous man." "Will you have another bowlful?" asks the woman who keeps the stall: "I knew a woman who went to worship God, and since she joined the Jesus-sect she has forgotten to smoke opium." Meanwhile our Christian brother is shovelling in the rice and morsels of salt vegetables with his chopsticks, and between his mouthfuls he is busy exposing the folly of worshipping idols, and showing how little they are able to bring health and wealth to a family; and then he explains how God has protected him since he



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became a Christian. "Yes," says one of the by-standers, "when you worship God you have less sickness, and you have less fear of demons, and it is a saving of expense." The expense of idolatry is great. In their own villages, it need scarcely be remarked, the Christians are very well known. Their refusal to subscribe to idolatrous ceremonies, or to the dramatic performances that take place in presence of the idols, often brings them rather unpleasantly before the notice of the headmen. And all their ways are a proverb to those who live around them.

The chief means, then, of winning the people is, of course, the Christians who are scattered among them. When a man first becomes a hearer he often brings with him a number of relatives and neighbours. Then some of them grow wearied of church-going; perhaps a pig dies, or an ox, or a child; and, discouraged themselves because God did not give them the protection hoped for, still more discouraged by the scorn of their neighbours, they go back to

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idolatry. The rest stand fast, but for several years gain no new converts, until suddenly quite a number are persuaded to join them, as if the fire that had been smouldering had suddenly kindled to flame.

But when we say that the best missionaries are the converts themselves, we do not mean that one convert can do more than one native minister or one missionary; we simply mean that a thousand converts can accomplish more than can any one missionary. I am inclined to think that, if all the missionaries were now to be withdrawn, Formosa would gradually become Christian, and if Formosa, why not China? But the process would be a very slow one, and, from all that has gone before, it is apparent that the Christianity would not be identical with Protestant Christianity, even if contact with the West, and especially with Western literature,[1] kept China from developing a kind of old Catholicism.

[1] It is a complete misunderstanding of history to suppose that, simply with the Bible in their hands, native Christians would speedily find their way to a developed Protestant Chris-

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We do not propose to leave China to be evangelized by her own sons. For, in the first place, the usefulness of the converts is, of course, somewhat dependent on the instruction that they receive in the Church, on the spirituality and friendly interest of the native preacher. The preachers, again, are more or less strongly stamped with the character of the missionaries who have taught them in school and in college. When we view the matter in this light we may begin, after all, to doubt whether a thousand converts are equal to one missionary, or rather we shall abandon all comparisons. It will be seen that the work of the teaching missionary may be of boundless evangelistic value; this is a work that will have to be maintained and strengthened when other forms of service have already been left to native Christians. First, then, it must be affirmed that if we had money and men the teaching staff might well be augmented. In

tianity. The Bible is no more intelligible to native converts now than it was to saints of the early centuries.

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Formosa, for example, we have but one professor for our theological college, and there is no educational institution for the more intelligent among the Chinese Heathen, simply because of the lack of funds. And thus the youth of the country are receiving from the Japanese an education that is Western, but non-Christian, sometimes anti-Christian.

With the rapid increase of converts, the oversight of congregations has become a heavier burden; but in the older fields, such as Amoy, native ordained ministers are now taking upon themselves the labour of catechizing and baptizing and shepherding the flocks. Swatow does not lag far behind, and even in Formosa, none too soon, half of the pastoral work has been taken off the missionaries' hands. So far, then, as this sort of work is concerned, we must look both before and behind. Some missions which think themselves short-handed in this respect may soon awake to find themselves well supplied. There is no doubt that in

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many quarters, when but a few years have passed, the oversight of congregations will be left almost wholly to natives. In Japan they have gone yet further; with or without reason, they begin to declare that the christianizing of their country may very well be left to themselves.

As for the work of the Evangelist, what shall I say? Many talk lightly of working through the natives. But, as Dr Macgregor of Amoy once remarked to me, the Chinese do what they see us doing. They need to be encouraged, they need to be *led*, by the more ardent European, who gathers a larger audience and makes a deeper impression. With all my heart I wish that the Church would pay more earnest heed to this matter.

It is perhaps a bold thing to attempt to calculate how many missionaries ought to be added to the present staff. It is safe to say that a great increase is urgently required, and that the victory is seriously delayed by the present dearth of workers. I venture to suggest

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something like a doubling of the force.[1] Mr John R. Mott[2] says that those who attempt to calculate the needs of the Heathen World vary much in their estimate, the number most frequently specified being one missionary to every 20,000 of the population. Adopting this proportion, he advocates an increase of the missionary army to 50,000. In this estimate he evidently includes the wives of missionaries, so that what he demands is rather less than a tripling of the present force (1907 A.D.).

We must remember that the ambassadors of Christ are very unevenly distributed. In some quarters the supply is probably sufficient, in others there are none at all. But what is suffi-

[1] Since the above was penned, the great Conference of all Chinese Missionaries has met in Shanghai. "It was proposed that the staff aimed at should be two *men* (*not educationists*) for each of the 1700 counties of China, and that each man might take oversight of ten Chinese. It was found that the total number of men *of all types* now in the field is 1604, and of native workers 9000"—*United Free Church Record*, Aug. 1907. This proposal means a good deal more than a doubling of the force; but in China the proportion of missionaries is small.

[2] "The Evangelisation of the World in this Generation," p. 161 (published 1900).

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ciency? What is the end in view? Are the missionaries simply to teach schools and colleges, and to superintend and instruct the Christians? If this be all,—and it is a work demanding men of highest character,—a moderate increase may suffice. Or do we aim at "the evangelization of the world in this generation"? What is the evangelization of the world? Do we mean preaching the Gospel till all have an opportunity to hear at least once? Well, I believe that, even with the present forces, much could be done towards this end. But what if some will not come to listen? And what if, shut up in Indian Zenanas, many cannot come to listen? And what if, after listening once, many do not understand, and, losing all interest, come no more to the preaching? Or what if some, listening once, fancy that they quite understand, and pay no further attention? Or what shall we say of those who, after listening once or twice, or twenty times, have scarcely grasped a single idea? Shall we then increase our staff and

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repeat our preaching till all are able to understand? But do even the people within the native Church apprehend the Gospel? Or can it be said that the people in the Home lands have been evangelized?

"The Evangelization of the World in this Generation" is, I fear, a phrase of very ambiguous meaning, perhaps, if we examine it, of no definite meaning.

But, setting this phrase aside, we may maintain that it is most desirable so to strengthen our forces as to have a great company of missionaries free, not to superintend, but to *lead* the native Christians in the work of preaching the Gospel in every town and village. The Christians of Europe are little aware how much the missionaries are drawn off from that which is supposed to be their peculiar business, the work of preaching the Gospel to the Heathen, and how, in a prosperous mission, the congregations and schools and colleges make such demands that, if all the Europeans were working night and day, some very important tasks

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might still be neglected. The evangelistic activity has, in many places, been almost killed by its own success, and sometimes almost the only man who carries on, except at odd times, any sort of work among Heathen, is the missionary doctor in his hospital.

If the Church wishes to have the Heathen evangelized, and if she wishes the missionaries to set the example, and to lead the native Christians, it is evident that she must be willing to send many more workers, ardent and able and persevering, given, and deliberately giving themselves, for this service. How many more ought to be sent?

A great council of missionaries held in India expressed the view that if that empire is to be evangelized, there ought to be one missionary for every 50,000 of the population, or say 6000 altogether. At this rate Formosa would demand 60 missionaries; at present we have scarcely 20; I think that we should be very well pleased if our number were increased to 40. But grant that for the whole world we

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are to allow the fairly liberal proportion of one missionary for every 50,000 of the population; in this case all that we need is an increase of the staff from 13,000 to 20,000. If we make allowance for sparsely peopled regions, we may even raise our estimate to 25,000, or one to every 40,000 of the non-Christian population. With the help of native workers and Christians, such a force would probably be large enough.

Thus it will be seen that the task before the Western Church is by no means an impossible one: it can scarcely be called overwhelming. Missionary enterprise makes such a small tax on our liberality, and, even if all were done that ought to be done, the whole amount required is such a trifle for wealthy Christian peoples, that one could even lament the lightness of the demand, and grieve that our fellow-countrymen are to have so little opportunity of showing by their service and by their sacrifice how much they love their Lord.

If the burdens waiting to be borne are com-

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paratively so few, there will surely be all the more eager rivalry as to the persons who shall be honoured by bearing them. Twenty years hence it will surely be impossible to say that any field remains untilled because of scarcity of labourers; they will be asking us to cease sending our money and our men because the excess is hindering the free development of native Christianity.

But if now we dare to affirm that the Church is doing all she can, and count it no disgrace that for the single game of golf we spend two or three times as much, and for football eight times as much, as we do on the work of spreading the name of Jesus, this acceptable time (who knows?) may pass away, and this day of salvation may turn to eclipse and gloom.

Let the Church double its forces *now*; a generation hence it may perhaps begin to reduce and withdraw; and a hundred years hence they shall no longer need to teach every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all men shall know Him, from the least even unto the

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greatest. This is no extravagant hope; if the present rate of progress can only be maintained, eighty or a hundred years hence there will be very few Heathen left. "Thy people shall be all righteous": some who are infants now may yet live to see that day.

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